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TRANSLATION

OF

HERMANN VENEMA'S

INEDITED

INSTITUTES OF THEOLOGY.

BY THE

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MINISTER OF FREE ST BERNARD'S CHURCH, EDINBURGH.

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PREFACE BY THE TRANSLATOR.

HERMANN VENEMA was a minister of the Dutch Reformed Church, and succeeded the younger VITRINGA, as Professor of Theology in the University of Franequer, in Friesland.

His "Institutes of Theology," the first volume of which, in English, is now submitted to the reader, were never published in the original language. The work exists only in manuscript, and came into the possession of the Translator some few years ago.

The genuineness of the "Institutes" was naturally at first a subject of doubt. But, as the work of translation proceeded, that doubt was completely removed. The marked identity between the style in which they are written and that of his printed works—the repeated references which he makes to these works, and especially to his "Ecclesiastical History"—and even the particular way in which, in both the one and the other, the sections and paragraphs are marked—make it certain that they proceeded from his pen.

In regard to the character of these "Institutes," the Translator will say nothing here. Should the reception which this volume meets with encourage the publication of the second, he will accompany it with an account of the Author, and with some observations on his Theological writings which could not be contained within the limits of a preface.

He may be permitted, however, to remark that the peculiar views which the Author entertains on some points attach only to those on which divines have agreed to differ, and that nothing will be met with in this volume to affect, except in the way of increase, the high

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estimation in which he has uniformly been held as a learned divine and a godly man.

In every work of this kind, the original is not improved (if it be not injured), by translation. And the indulgence of the reader is more particularly solicited in regard to that which is now presented to him, inasmuch as the deciphering of a manuscript has its own peculiar difficulties, in addition to those which attend the transference of its contents from one language to another.

The notes appended are the Translator's, and for these alone he is responsible.

EDINBURGH, 1850.

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A SYSTEM OF THEOLOGY.

OF THEOLOGY IN GENERAL.

THEOLOGY DEFINED—THE PARTS OF WHICH IT CONSISTS—ITS SUBJECTS AND OBJECTS—HEATHEN, MOHAMMEDAN, JEWISH, AND CHRISTIAN THEOLOGY—MODE OF TEACHING THEOLOGY—CATECHETICAL, HOMILETIC, AND SCHOLASTIC.

THEOLOGY may be considered under two general divisions;—the one embracing preliminary matter (*προλέγομενα*); the other, the body or substance of doctrine. Under the former are comprehended, *first*, a general idea of theology, and, *secondly*, the principles of Reason and Revelation, which lie at the foundation of the system we purpose to unfold.

A general idea of theology may be attained by attending to the definition of the term, and by considering the parts into which the subject denoted by the term is divided.

The term is of Greek origin,—being compounded of *θεὸς* and of *λόγος*. Let it be observed, that we use *θεολόγος* in an active sense, as denoting one who treats or discourses of God, *λέγων περὶ τοῦ Θεοῦ*, *disserens de Deo*. For there is a difference in the meaning of this word, according to the way in which it is accented. *Θεόλογος* is used passively, and signifies the individual to whom God speaks; whereas *θεολόγος* is used actively, and refers to one who speaks to others of God and of divine things. We have an instance of the same distinction in the word *πρωτότοκος*, which, with the antepenultimate accent, means a first-born child, but, with the penultimate (*πρωτοτόκος*), him by whom the first-born is begotten. We understand the word *θεολόγος* in the latter sense.

It is true, that the words *theology* and *theologian* are not to be found in the sacred volume; but they are not, as some absurdly suppose, to be, on that account, dispensed with and set aside. Although they were first employed by heathen writers, and were, at a subse-

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quent period, adopted by the teachers of Christianity, this forms no argument for their rejection; because not only do they express with sufficient distinctness the subject to which they refer, but the simple words of which they are made up are to be met with in the Word of God. Thus we have τὰ λόγια τοῦ Θεοῦ, Rom. iii. 2; λόγια Θεοῦ, 1 Pet. iv. 11; τὸν λόγον τοῦ Θεοῦ, Luke viii. 21; λέγων τὰ περὶ τῆς βασιλείας τοῦ Θεοῦ, Acts i. 3. We have also the synonymous expression, πείθειν τὸν Θεόν, Gal. i. 10, to speak of God for the purpose of commending him to others,—to discourse of divine things, with the view of convincing others of their excellence and importance, and of persuading others to attend to them.

Some have supposed that the words theologian and prophet are synonymous, from the circumstance of their being used in Scripture the one for the other, 1 Cor. xiv. 4. But there is this essential difference between them. A prophet denotes one who speaks under the influence of inspiration or by immediate revelation from God, whether he simply declares the truths thus communicated to him, or makes these truths the subject of exposition or discourse. This is obviously the meaning of the word in the passage just quoted, in which the Apostle treats of the *extraordinary* gifts bestowed upon the Church. A theologian, again, is one who merely teaches or discourses of divine things, not however by direct revelation from heaven, but in the exercise of the faculties with which God has endowed him.

But, leaving the etymological definition of the term, we observe, that it may be understood in a threefold sense. In its *widest* acceptation, it signifies all that is taught concerning God, whatever be its character, whatever be the source from which it is derived, whether it be true or false. In this sense it is applicable only to the heathen, who, although they all had their philosophers and theologians, (the Persians, for instance, their Magi, and the Greeks, their Gymnosophists,) yet owed to tradition almost all they knew and believed of God. In a more *restricted* view, theology consists of the truths revealed in Scripture, which relate to the nature, works, and worship, of God, and to all that concerns his glory and the salvation of men.

This definition has, what every definition should have, its generic character and specific difference.

The former properly consists in the truths or doctrines taught, not indeed, viewed as a science. Such a term relates only to the mind of him who *knows* these truths; whereas the theologian communicates them orally or in writing to others. Its generic character, therefore, lies in doctrine, which, in our view, is the sum of its varied but mu-

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tually connected truths. It is called in Scripture תורה, a word signifying instruction in the art of throwing the javelin, and hence, of reaching a mark—of attaining an end. Now, man's end being the enjoyment of happiness in communion with God, it denotes instruction in that which tends to secure his happiness. It is employed in Scripture to signify saving truth. "Out of Sion shall go forth the *law*," Isa. ii. 3; "The isles shall wait for his *law*," Isa. xlii. 4. In the New Testament, it is called *doctrine*, "My *doctrine* is not mine, but his that sent me," John vii. 16;—"*the wisdom of God in a mystery*," 1 Cor. ii. 7;—"*the knowledge of God in the face of Jesus Christ*," 2 Cor. iv. 6;—and "*the knowledge of God*," Colos. i. 10.

But the definition has also its specific difference; and our theological system differs from all other sciences in its *object*.

That object, as the word indicates, is God,—his nature, attributes, and works; every thing, in short, that relates to him and to the worship due to him. Whatever is *from* God as its origin; whatever is *by* God as the means of its production; whatever is *to* God as the end for which it was created,—such is the object of theology;—an object which, from its excellence, its greatness, and extent, shews the infinite superiority and value of the system to which it belongs.

But theology differs from all other sciences in the *end* which it has in view;—the latter relating to the present life only, the former, to glory of God and the happiness of the life to come.

This end is either *immediate* or *remote*. *Immediately*, it is the worship and service of God; and, therefore, our system teaches that he should be praised and glorified by men. *Remotely*, it is our everlasting happiness in communion with God, as we shall hereafter more fully explain. Now such doctrine as this is saving, inasmuch as it tends to promote the divine glory and to put us in possession of true happiness, and points out the way in which that happiness may be secured, even in the enjoyment of fellowship with God in Christ.

In contradistinction to what the fathers of the Church called *οἰκονομία*, or the truths relating to the incarnation, life, and death of Christ, theology, in its *strictest* sense, is considered as treating particularly of the Godhead and of the divinity of Christ and of the Holy Spirit. In this view, a theologian is one who proves from Scripture that the Son and the Holy Spirit are divine and equal with God the Father. John was called by pre-eminence a theologian, because he established at greater length than the other Apostles the

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doctrine of our Lord's divinity. So was Gregory of Nazianzum, who proved the same doctrine, in opposition to the Arians. We understand theology in the second of these senses.

In order to attain a clearer knowledge of our system, it will be of use to consider the parts into which it is divided. These relate to theology itself and to the method of teaching it. The former comprehends the subjects in whom it is found,—the objects with which it is conversant,—and the thing itself.

The subjects of theology are God and his rational creatures. Hence it is divided into the *archetype* or original pattern, and the *ectype* or copy;—the former being the knowledge which God himself has, who is best acquainted with his own nature and perfections, and the latter, the knowledge which the creatures possess of him, and which is formed after the pattern of his own knowledge. This knowledge is of different kinds, according to the persons in whom it is found, and is called the knowledge of *union*, of *vision*, and of *revelation*.

The knowledge of *union* is that which Christ possesses, in consequence of the very close and intimate union which subsisted in him between the divine and human natures. "All things," said he, "are delivered unto me of my Father; and no man knoweth the Son but the Father; neither knoweth any man the Father, save the Son, and he to whomsoever the Son will reveal him," Matt. xi. 27. The Spirit of wisdom and understanding, it was predicted, would rest upon him, Is. xi. 2. The knowledge of *vision*, again, is that which is possessed by angels and glorified spirits in the heavenly world. They walk not by faith, but by sight, 2 Cor. v. 7; they "see face to face, and know even as they are known," 1 Cor. xiii. 12; they "do always behold the face of God, which is in heaven," Matt. xviii. 10. The knowledge of *revelation*, finally, is that which men in this world have, whether it be attained by the exercise of reason and from natural principles, or through the medium of the written Word, in which God has revealed all that is necessary to be known concerning himself.

The objects with which theology is conversant are God, his attributes, and his works. In this sense, it is divided into *theoretical* and *practical*. *Theoretical* or *speculative* theology is the subject of contemplation and investigation alone, and embraces those truths which, although they may fairly be viewed as involving certain duties, have yet, in their own nature, no direct practical bearing. Such are those which relate to God, to his decrees, and to his works of creation and providence. They exist in the mind—they are taken cog-

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nizance of by the understanding, and indicate, at the same time, or point to, a certain course of duty, on our part, toward God. *Practical* theology directly inculcates the worship of God and the duties which we owe to him, and embraces, therefore, those truths which relate to the divine glory,—as the love of God and the love of our neighbour, &c. It is thus what is called "the acknowledging of the truth which is after godliness," Tit. i. 1.

In regard to theology itself, it may be viewed as Heathen, Mohammedan, Jewish, and Christian. The first of these (such, according to Augustine,* was the opinion of Varro and Scaevola) was of three kinds, *political*, *fabulous*, and *natural*.

Their *political* theology, which was the most ancient, consisted of those rites and ceremonies with which their gods were daily worshipped, each in his own particular way. It was *Oriental* and *Grecian*. The former was that of the Egyptians and Phœnicians, who believed in the existence of two principles, the sun, and the moon or the earth, and who formed for themselves images of these,—Osiris representing the former, and Isis, the latter. In these images or representations they supposed that their gods were present. Hence objects inanimate and offensive came to be worshipped as divine, and the way was prepared for the general introduction of the worship of images. The latter, or the political theology of the *Greeks*, was different from the Oriental. They worshipped their own heroes, *i. e.* the souls of the departed, who, in this life, had been conspicuous for their virtues, or who had conferred upon them some signal benefits. Hence arose the gods of the Greeks and Romans. In the course of time, they also adopted the two principles of which we have just spoken. Mention is made of this religion in 2 Kings xvii. 26, where those who were placed in the cities of the Samaritans are said to have been ignorant of the way in which the god of the land was to be worshipped.

The heathen had also their *fabulous* theology. This was peculiar to their poets, who began to speak somewhat too freely of the gods; but who, awed by the priests, spoke of their divinities and of their works only in fables. The most distinguished of this class were Hesiod, Homer, and Ovid, who flourished about the commencement of the kingdom of Israel. After the time of Cyrus, however, the Greeks began to apply themselves more diligently to the attainment of the knowledge of God; and we find Pherecides the Syrian, Pythagoras, and others, making theology the subject of philosophical disquisition.

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* Aug. "De Civitate Dei."

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The Heathen had, moreover, their *natural* theology, which was framed by their philosophers. The chief of these was the tutor of Pythagoras, Pherecides the Syrian, who lived in the reign of Cyrus, the king of the Persians.

The *Mohammedan* religion had for its founder and patron the fanatical and warlike impostor Mohammed, who lived in the beginning of the seventh century.* He formed his system out of the Heathen, Jewish, and Christian religions, and taught, that there was one God, and that he himself was his great prophet. He denied the doctrine of the Trinity, adopted whatever was pleasing, rejected whatever seemed to him harsh and offensive, and thus constructed a theology which propounded as truth only what was agreeable to the carnal mind.

The *Jewish* religion is either Patriarchal or Mosaic, and was characterized by the multiplicity of its rites and ceremonies. It is still further divided into the religion of the Pharisees, Sadducees, and Essenes,—the last of whom correspond to the Mennonites of later times.

The last is the *Christian* religion, which is either false or true.

The former of these includes the religion of the Gnostics, which continued during the first three centuries, and represented the perfection of man as consisting in a knowledge of philosophy—of the Arians, who denied the divinity of Christ, and whose doctrine prevailed in the Church in the fourth, and fifth, and sixth centuries—of the Pelagians, who appeared in the fifth century, and maintained the freedom of the will—of the Papists, of whom we shall speak in a future part of this work—and of the Socinians, who derive their origin from Laelius and Faustus Socinus, and who deny that Christ died to atone for sin, and that salvation cannot be attained by our own efforts.

True religion is *mixed* and *pure*. The former, which, though we call it mixed, we yet regard as false, comprehends the religion of the Arminians, who sprang from Arminius—of the Remonstrants, who are distinct from the Socinians—of the Mennonites, who take their name from Simon Menno, a native of Friesland in Germany—and of the Lutherans. *Pure* religion, that which is to engage our attention, teaches how the sinner may attain salvation by Jesus Christ.

In regard to the way in which theology has been taught, we observe that there were three modes, the *catechetical*, the *homiletic*, and the *scholastic*.

The *first* embraced all the first principles of theology, or the leading articles of faith, and, from its conveying instruction in the form

* Born A. D. 612.

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of question and answer, was adapted to the capacities of all. The *second* consisted of public addresses which, in former times especially, embraced the fundamental articles of religion, the virtues, and the general meaning of Scripture. The *third* consisted, for the most part, of disputes with opponents, whether chargeable with heresy or with schism. It was subjected to no rules, was characterized by no method, and was not reduced into a systematic form. The first attempt to frame a Theological system was made in the seventh century by Isidorus of Seville; but the result of his labours was meagre in the extreme. John Damascenus, in the eighth century, was more successful, and constructed a system which he divided into four parts,—the first treating of God; the second, of the creatures; the third, of Christ and the plan of salvation; and the fourth, of the sacraments. The Rabbins, also, in the ninth, and three following centuries, gave their attention to this matter. Among these were Lanfranc, Anselm, and Victor Hugo, who preceded the scholastic writers, properly so called.

These last, the scholastic writers namely, may be regarded as belonging to three different periods. The first begins with Peter Lombard,—a Parisian bishop, who lived in the twelfth century, who regarded the Patristic divines and their writings as a source of theology, and who, after the example of John Damascenus, reduced theology into a new form,—and extends to the days of Thomas Aquinas. The second period begins with Thomas Aquinas, or with Albert the Great, bishop of Ratisbon, in the thirteenth century, and extends to the time of Durandus of St Portian in the fourteenth. It is characterized by the addition of Aristotle to the sources already mentioned. The third period dates from the days of Durandus to the seventeenth century. Its leading feature, like the preceding, is the rank and authority assigned to Aristotle as a source of theology.

We cannot but speak in terms of commendation of the order and ingenuity of the scholastic method, and of the moderation with which it treated all who differed in opinion; for, although there was disagreement and disputation, they settled their controversies without bringing against each other the charge of heresy. And yet there were many things in it to be condemned;—especially idle and unprofitable speculations, an excessive eagerness for disputation, false principles, an ignorance of Scripture and, in particular, of the Oriental languages, and a diffuse and unpolished style. The systems of Lombard and Aquinas, however, deserve to be read.

About the time of the Reformation, theology, as a system, was presented in a new light, and received many emendations, agreeable to

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reason and the Word of God; yet in a variety of ways, which we shall not now detail.

Let us say here, in a word, what a theological system ought to be, and what the parts are of which it should consist. It should be *didactic*, or explain and prove from Scripture or from reason the truths which it teaches—it should be *polemic* or *critical, i. e.*, the truths explained and proved should be vindicated from the objections and difficulties of adversaries, and a fair view given of the various opinions of those who differ. It should moreover be *practical*, or exhibit the moral use and tendency of the truths which have been thus, in a didactic and polemical form, set forth and discussed. As there is no theological truth which has not some practical bearing, it will be our endeavour to frame our system in this way.

In addition to what has now been stated, there are included in the preliminary points (*προλέγομενα*,) the sources or principles from which our doctrines are drawn. For, if the science of theology be certain, so must its principles, which are, as it were, the springs from which it proceeds. Now these principles are two, the one innate, the other revealed,—reason and revelation.

We shall now consider these in their order.

CHAPTER I.

OF REASON.

REASON DEFINED—CONSCIENCE—JUDGMENT—INNATE IDEAS—ATHEISTS—ARGUMENTS A PRIORI AND A POSTERIORI FOR THE EXISTENCE OF GOD.

By reason, we understand the mind furnished with speculative and practical notions, by which it can distinguish between what is good and bad, and between what is true and false. It is clear, from this definition, that reason includes the conscience; yet there is a certain difference between them. Reason is conversant with speculative notions, while conscience has to do with those that are practical;—reason distinguishes between what is true and false in opinion; conscience, between what is good and bad in conduct.

Considered in an active sense, reason denotes that power in us which deduces truths, or the mind itself, and, in particular, the reasoning faculty; while, in a passive sense, it signifies that from which truths are deduced.

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The difference between reason and the conscience will be seen, by attending to what they have in common, and to the points in which they differ. They agree in having the same object and the same subject. Reason, considered abstractly or in its object, includes all reasoning or is a connected series or chain of reasonings. Viewed concretely, it is the subject in which notions, whether speculative or practical, exist. This subject is the mind, and in a stricter sense, as we shall explain, the judgment. The notions, speculative as well as practical, from which all reasoning proceeds, constitute reason in the former sense or the object of reason. These may be reduced to three;

First, to *ideas*, by which we understand the spiritual and corporeal images which are the representations of things. For an idea is a first principle from which, as itself a reason, I reason; and an image of a thing which represents a thing with its attributes and properties, leads me to the knowledge of that thing. For example, I have the idea of a house; that idea is an image in my mind, and, as from that idea I bring out what a house is, in like manner I have an idea of God, as an absolutely perfect Being; and thence derive all his other attributes.

We have, in the second place, *axioms*, that is, self-evident truths —truths intuitively ascertained, which require no reasoning to prove that they are worthy of being believed,—such as, twice two are four; a whole is greater than its part. They are called theoretical axioms. That God is to be worshipped is a practical one.

We have, in the third place, *reasoning*, which, on account of its intimate connection with reason itself, may be ranked among first principles. For example, God is possessed of all power, *therefore* he could create the world,—this is reasoning. I must know, of course, what omnipotence is, and what it is to create; but, when I know these, the two ideas are closely linked together. We say, therefore, that reason cannot err; for whatever is deduced from an ascertained truth, by a right process of reasoning, must also, of necessity, be true.

Reason, in the concrete, denotes the subject in which notions reside. This subject is the mind generally, and, in particular, the judgment.

As the mind is a spiritual substance, it is, on this account, most adapted and able to understand. When we say that man is superior to the other animals in being endued with reason, we mean by reason the mind, including conscience, furnished with the notions we have already mentioned.

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The proper subject of reason is the judgment,—that faculty of the mind by which we reason from the notions already explained, by combining and separating them, and thus ascertain what is good and what is evil. Reason is thus taken for the faculty of reasoning; and therefore the judgment is properly called the subject of reason. In like manner, conscience is taken for the judgment, as when the Apostle speaks of the conscience of a weak brother, 1 Cor. viii. 7.

Let us now see in what respects reason and conscience differ.

The former has to do with theoretical notions; the latter, with those that are practical: the former teaches that God is; the latter inculcates the duty of worshipping him.

Reason does nothing more than give information; conscience, by promising reward and threatening punishment, binds us to do what is good, and to avoid what is evil, Rom. i. 32. It binds us, therefore, to worship God, and thus discharges the office not only of a teacher, but of a lawgiver.

Conscience, moreover, is a reflex act of the mind, and considers the actions which we perform, with reference to their conformity or opposition to the divine law. It is not necessary that, in so doing, conscience be viewed in reference to God; for the expression,—Am I conscious to myself—conscious of guilt?—is sufficiently strong, and has reference to the mind. We have no objections, however, to its being regarded in the former of these aspects; for it is the tribunal of God in the soul, and is called by Solomon "the candle of the Lord," Prov. xx. 27. From this reflex act arise the feelings of love, hatred, joy, fear, peace, and shame.

Reason is a source of theology, because it can, of itself, lead man to the knowledge of God and of his attributes. In saying this, we oppose the Socinians, (not to mention others,) who hold that the knowledge of God is preserved and propagated only by parental instruction, and that there is nothing in the nature of things—nothing in reason—from which we may infer that God exists. This opinion is utterly false, and may be shown to be so by the following arguments.

The first is called the *a priori* argument, and is drawn from the nature of man. He is a Being endued with reason, and excels other creatures because he possesses this noble gift. From this position we infer that reason is a source of knowledge.

(1.) If he be thus superior by the possession of reason, he is superior also by the possession of the faculty of reasoning, and, from the contemplation of the objects that present themselves, may come to the conclusion that there is a God. (2.) Reason, indeed, would

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be useless if man did not know for what end God had bestowed upon him this excellent gift. But that end must be held to be, that we might know him, and that too *a priori*, by which we mean the demonstration of the effect from the nature of the cause.

The second is the argument *a posteriori*. There are entire systems of theology, drawn from reason alone. The more polished nations of antiquity knew something of God and of his attributes. We find Cicero and Seneca reasoning sometimes correctly on the subject. The former, in his treatise *De Natura Deorum*, says, "there is no nation so sunk in barbarism as not to have the persuasion that there is a God." Even uncivilized nations have not been without some knowledge of God, although they have wandered far from the truth. "The fool hath said in his heart, There is no God," Psal. xiv. 1. He cannot learn that there is a God from innate knowledge; yet, if he will use his reason aright, he will assuredly come to such a conclusion.

Our third argument is drawn from Scripture. "The heavens," says David, "declare the glory of God," Psal. xix. 1. "All thy works shall praise thee, O Lord," Psal. cxlv. 10. "But ask now the beasts," says Job," and they shall teach thee, and the fowls of the air, and they shall tell thee. Or speak to the earth, and it shall teach thee; and the fishes of the sea shall declare unto thee. Who knoweth not in all these, that the hand of the Lord hath wrought this?" Job xii. 7–9. "Lift up your eyes on high, and behold who hath created these things," Isa. xl. 26. "Nevertheless he left not himself without witness, in that he did good, and gave us rain from heaven and fruitful seasons, filling our hearts with food and gladness," Acts xiv. 17. "For the invisible things of him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even his eternal power and Godhead; so that they are without excuse," Rom. i. 20. It is absurd to say, as the Socinians do, that the Apostle is speaking, in the last passage, of evangelical knowledge; and that he understands, by invisible things, the once unrevealed mysteries of the Gospel, and, by Gódhead, what God wishes us continually to do. For it is unquestionable, that Socinus considered the Apostle as referring to the new creation by Christ, and, therefore, as intimating, that those things which, from the creation, were invisible and unknown to men, were now both seen and known by what God had done.

(1.) It is evident that Paul is here speaking of the heathen, or of those who had not been favoured with the light of the Gospel; for he

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refers to the knowledge which is derived, not from revelation, but from rational creatures and from the creation of the world.

(2.) He tells us that "the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who hold the truth in unrighteousness," verse 17.

(3.) The words and phrases, moreover, are grossly perverted Who ever heard that by "the things that are made" we are to understand the miracles recorded in the New Testament and that the eternal power of God was only promised? The erroneousness of such an interpretation must be obvious to all.

Socinus urges another objection, namely, that the knowledge of God is obtained by faith alone, according to the statement of the Apostle, "He that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him," Heb. xi. 6. To this we reply, in the *first* place, that, while the Apostle says this truth is to be believed, he does not say whence this faith springs, whether from reason or from revelation. In the *second* place, a deeper principle is involved in this passage. He is speaking of Enoch, who, before his translation to heaven, "had this testimony that he pleased God;" and adds, that no one can please God, unless by faith he believe that he is the rewarder of those that seek him,—that he is Jehovah, who fulfils his promises.

Still further, Socinians refer to the 14th Psalm, where we find it written, "The fool hath said in his heart, There is no God." But we are not speaking of fools, but of men endued with reason. David also refers not to speculative atheists, but to those who endeavour to persuade themselves that there is no God. It is not said that they deny the existence, but the providence of God. If a fool were to say that there is no God, a rational man would not believe him.

Reason is a *primary* source of theology, because it is innate. This is not to be understood as implying that ideas are so, (although philosophers of more recent times have maintained that they are;) but we say that we are possessed of certain powers which enable us to form ideas. Some hold, indeed, that there is in our minds some indescribable instinctive power, by which we are borne and carried forward to something which we do not know, and yet all the time we are borne and carried forward. But what we do not know is to us in reality nothing. But, to return, we oppose the theory of innate ideas by the following arguments:—

In the *first* place, ideas have no existence except by contemplating their objects. If it be the case, as it really is, either that

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the mind is not always in active exercise, or that ideas arise upon reflection (for, if ideas are not present to the mind except by contemplating their objects, where, we ask, do they lie concealed?) they are not innate. Besides, there is nothing in the memory which was not formerly in the understanding. But ideas which are falsely said to be innate are not at all times in the memory. Therefore they are not innate.

In the *second* place, experience teaches us, that ideas are formed by the active exercise of the mind; for no one has an idea of God, except by reflection. Hence, men have ideas of God, some clearer, others more obscure: and hence, also, we experience an accession to our ideas by continued contemplation. We see, therefore, that there is a faculty implanted in us by God, which, from the contemplation of objects, can form those ideas of things which we have; so that we maintain, that we have a certain innate theology, inasmuch as we have an innate faculty of forming ideas, and thus, by reasoning, can attain to the knowledge of God and of the worship due to him.

We say, again, that reason is a primary source of theology, because revelation supposes it, and because it teaches, us, (1.) That God exists, and, (2.) That he ought to be worshipped. Reason, therefore, is subordinate to revelation. In a speculative point of view, it teaches the existence of God; practically, or considered as conscience, it inculcates the duty of worshipping God.

In regard to the existence of God, revelation takes for granted that a man may, in the exercise of his reason, come to the conclusion that there is a God; and it is doubtful whether it be for the credit and honour of Christianity to call this in question, seeing it is a fact which the whole system of revealed truth plainly presupposes. At the same time, the illustration of this point may serve two useful ends. It may serve to convince atheists, and to confirm the minds of those who believe this great truth.

Atheists are of two kinds,—*practical* and *speculative*. The former acknowledge God in word; but in their works they really deny him. To this class belong the vast multitudes who live in such a way that, if we were to judge of them by their conduct, we would at once say, that they do not believe in the being of God at all. And to this class we refer, as the Apostle does, all the wicked, Tit. i. 16. The latter, again, are those who, in words, deny the true God. This denial proceeds from two causes. In the *first* place, They are grossly ignorant of God, inasmuch as they attribute to him properties which go to destroy the reason of his exist-

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ence, and deny those which are inseparably connected with his nature—refuse to admit that he created and governs the world —and regard him as a material being like ourselves. These are the persons who, as the Apostle says, are "without God in the world," Eph. ii. 12. In the *second* place, They are filled with enmity against God. Their "conscience," as the Apostle tells us, is "seared as with a hot iron," that is, it is insensible by reason of sin, 1 Tim. iv. 2. Anxious that all traces of him should be obliterated, they know no other expedient than that of denying him, and of turning away their eyes from the light that is reflected from his works. Not only will they not look upon this light, but they fix upon matters that are involved in obscurity,—upon his providence, for instance, and upon his decree of predestination, which baffle their comprehension, which no man, indeed, can understand. All such cavillings on theological questions have a strong tendency to confirm in unbelief those who are on the threshold of atheism.

It is a question among theologians, whether there be, in reality, speculative atheists,—persons who, after strict investigation, maintain with full persuasion of its truth, and onwards to the very close of life, the opinion that there is no God, and who enjoy peace of mind in holding that opinion. It does not seem to us, that, among those who enjoy the light of the Gospel any such persons can be found. We cannot take it upon us to say, that any such can be found even among the heathen; for the proof of the divine existence is so clear, that it forces itself upon men's attention. We cannot believe that the consciences of such, if such there be, remain, during the whole of life, in a state of insensibility and slumber. The actions of those who have *professed* to be atheists prove rather the contrary; for they have brought the subject before their own minds, and, instead of enjoying peace in holding their opinion, have been agitated by a feeling of restlessness and insecurity. The very fact of those who held this opinion disputing among themselves shews that they were far from being easy in the maintenance of their scepticism. Nay more, in some cases their boldness has given way to terror of soul; and some of them, towards the close of life, have confessed in despair that there is a God, and that they dreaded the infliction of his righteous judgment.

But, while the consideration of this subject may serve to convince atheists of their folly and guilt, it at the same time furnishes Christians with strong reasons and arguments, by which to repel the temptations of Satan, who labours to awaken doubts in their minds in re-

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gard to this fundamental article of their faith. The belief of the divine existence is but feeble with the best. If it were strong and deeply rooted, it would be impossible for them to rest satisfied with their low attainments,—they would eagerly strive after a higher measure of excellence. And if they would reap additional benefit from meditating on this subject, they must approach it with minds in a suitable state of preparation, and not by any means according to the advice of philosophers of more recent times, who say that we should doubt every thing, unless we see in our own minds, and perceive by the clearest demonstration, that it is true. We would, however, not only discourage all doubting, but we would dissuade all who love and trust in God from disputing regarding his existence. The subject is one of great importance. And surely it is not for us, who are but the creatures of a day, to call in question the being of him whose goodness we continually experience. Let us, therefore, humbly apply our minds to the subject, and despise the folly of atheism.

There are two arguments for the existence of God;—the one derived from the nature of God himself, and called the *a priori* argument; the other drawn from the works of God, and called the *a posteriori* argument. The latter is, in our opinion, the better of the two, and with it, therefore, we shall begin.

In the world we perceive various effects which guide us in proving the being of God. There is a mind in man; there is a conscience in the mind. Without us there is the world; and, in the world there are motion and order. Our demonstration, therefore, will be

(a) General.
(b) Special.

(a) We begin with the former, which consists of proofs derived from effects in general, and shall make it good by the following series of propositions:—

In the *first* place, *All things which have a cause without themselves have been produced by something else.* From this proposition we reason thus:—Every thing that exists owes its existence to a cause—to something; so that I may ask concerning it, why it exists? The cause is either in the object itself, or it is not. When it is in the object itself, then that object exists in virtue of its own perfect nature, or it exists necessarily. When the cause is not in the object itself, then that object does not necessarily exist, but depends for its being on something without itself. Our first proposition, then, is, *that every object in the world does not exist necessarily, or in virtue of its own nature.* This we prove in the following way:—

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(*a.*) All things in the world, in respect of their being and essence, are *contingent* and not necessary. Whatever has not a necessary cannot be conceived as having an independent existence. But we may, without any contradiction, conceive the world as being, or not being: there is nothing in it which compels me to believe that it exists necessarily. It follows, therefore, that it is not self-existent; but proceeds from a cause extraneous to itself.

(*b.*) Again, the world is not only contingent, but it is *limited* in its nature. Whether we look to the heavens above us or to the earth on which we dwell, whether we consider man or the animals that are beneath him, we find no perfection. This being the case, we say, that whatever is limited is not self-existent. Whatever is self-existent must be perfect;—whatever, on the contrary, is limited, has its limits assigned to it by another. But the world is thus limited, and, therefore, is not self-existent, but proceeds from a cause without itself, and is limited by that cause.

(*c.*) Once more, the world exists not *on its own account*, but *on account of others*, for a final implies an efficient cause. Now an object which is not *propter se* is not *a se*. This is evident from what we see around us. Every object with which we are acquainted has been produced for some end;—the eye, for instance, for seeing,—the sun, for the system of which it is the centre,—and the earth, for man. Whatever, therefore, exists for another end is not self-existent; for everything that exists by virtue of its own perfect nature does not exist on account of anything else. But that which exists for another is determined by that other, and has not the reason of its existence in itself. Now the whole world bears upon it the mark of imperfection, and so do all the objects which are in it, and, therefore, taken together, they cannot constitute perfection. But a self-existent is a perfect object, because no other object limits it; and, therefore, it follows, that the world being imperfect is not self-existent, but has the cause of its existence without itself,—that cause being God.

In the *second* place, *All things in the world proceed from another cause.* This proposition inquires into the cause to which they owe their origin. The series of secondary causes of existing objects cannot be infinite, but must terminate in some first and perfect cause. We say that one man owes his being to another, and this other, to one who went before him; but then there is a point in the series at which we must stop. We prove this by the following arguments:

(*a.*) If there be not some cause which is not the effect of

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another, it will follow that all existing things are effects without a cause. But this is absurd; for, if we admit a cause, this, in its turn, will be the effect of some other cause, and thus the series will be infinite, which is the same as saying that there is no cause at all. But, as every effect must have a cause, it follows that there must be some cause which is not itself the effect or production of another.

(*b*) Whatever is infinite has neither beginning nor end; but the succession of time has both. Wherever there is an end, besides, there must also be a middle and a beginning, otherwise there could be no end. Now, as secondary causes have an end, they must also have a beginning and a first cause, from which they all proceed. This cause is self-existent and is not the product of another.

(*b*) Whatever is infinite is incapable alike of increase or diminution. But the succession of secondary causes is susceptible of both; for we can conceive a greater or less number of men being born into the world. This succession, therefore, cannot be infinite, but must stop at a point in the series, beyond which we cannot go, —in other words, it must have a *first cause.*

In the *third* place, *The first cause must be possessed of every perfection, either as having being in itself, or as having power to produce those properties which all effects possess.* For there cannot be more in the effect than there is in the cause. But in the effects I perceive wisdom, power, &c., and, therefore, the first cause also must have these properties. "He that planted the ear, shall he not hear? he that formed the eye, shall he not see?" Psal. xciv. 9. The followers of Spinoza deny this, especially in regard to the liberty or power of action. But it may be proved thus:

(*a*) We find this liberty in the effects,—it must, therefore, be in the cause; for there cannot be more in the former than there is in the latter.

(*b*) We observe a difference in our actions,—some being mechanical; others, the result of reason; and others, again, *indifferently gree.* We have this liberty, then, and, therefore, it must also be in the first cause.

(*c*) The world is governed by ordinary laws; but, in miracles, there is a departure from these, which proves that the cause must be free. This is plain also from the ends or purposes to which all things are ordained. The cause which ordains all things to certain ends is uncontrolled in doing so, and has liberty to

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will and act. The ordaining cause must be free—must have power to will and to act.

In the *fourth* place, *The cause must be distinct from the effects, not inherent in them.* The reason is manifest.

Effects are of the most widely opposite description,—some being spiritual, and others material. These properties cannot apply to one and the same object; and, therefore, the producing cause must be different from the thing produced.

If the cause were not different from the effects, then it must fall under the number of the latter. But we have shewn, that there is a self-existing cause; and, therefore, that cause must be distinct from the effects produced by it.

If the cause were not distinct, then the effects would be necessary, having their cause in themselves. But, as all things are free, they argue a free cause, and a cause, therefore, distinct from themselves.

In the *fifth* place, *The first cause of these effects is self-existent.* As we have already proved that there is a cause possessed of intelligence and freedom, and distinct from other objects, we conclude, that this cause is the being whom we call God.

The *special* or *particular* proof consists in applying the propositions already laid down to particular effects. Among these effects we reckon mind and body, from which we shall prove the existence of God.

The former, which is a substance different from the latter, is not the product of itself; but, being limited in its nature, owes its existence to some cause without itself. That cause cannot be in our parents, for they were only the instruments of our being; and the same thing may be said of those of whom they were born. We have already shewn, that the cause must have all the properties which are found in the effects. Now, the mind is endued with intelligence, power, and freedom, and, therefore, the cause by which it was produced must be so too.

Look, again, at the conscience, which acts the part of teacher, lawgiver, and judge. In the first of these capacities, it instructs us in what is good and evil; in the second, it denounces threatening; in the third, it inflicts punishment.

Conscience discharges towards us the office of a *teacher*. But the doctrine of which it approves does not originate with man, either singly or collectively. For it enjoins the pursuit of virtue, because it is good. But it is good just because there is a God. There

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could be otherwise no reason why it should be so called; and, therefore, the doctrine which conscience teaches, being important in its nature and universal in its extent, shews, that it has been engraven upon it by a wise, just, and omnipotent cause.

As a *lawgiver*, conscience promises good and threatens evil. But whence is this? Man cannot enact for himself laws in opposition to his own nature; and, therefore, we must ascend to a higher cause, whose three offices conscience is deputed to perform.

As a *judge*, it inflicts punishment. Hence a man is often seized with terror and remorse; but this is not his own voluntary doing, and proves, therefore, the existence of God.

We deduce an argument also from the order and motion which are perceived in external things. They are moved, not by themselves, but by a cause without them. The principle of motion is not in the things moving, and, therefore, wherever there is motion, there must be a moving cause, and there is no moving cause but God.

We now proceed to consider what is called the *a priori* argument which is drawn from the conception which we form of a God. This conception is twofold, *a priori* and *a posteriori*.

The former is founded on the connection which is supposed to exist between the idea of a God and his necessary existence. Those who employ this argument hold, that supreme perfection and necessary existence cannot be separated. If we have a clear and distinct conception in our minds of the former, then the latter follows, and we may affirm that a being possessing it does exist. But to begin reasoning in this way is labour lost; because we take for granted the thing to be proved, namely, that we have such a clear and distinct conception of the nature of God. When it can be proved that we have, then the argument will be conclusive, and the existence of a perfect being cannot be called in question.

The latter is founded on the supposition, that every idea requires an object to which it agrees, and also an efficient cause from which it proceeds. But this is an argument of variable force. For, if the idea which I entertain be unreal, the object of the idea can be only unreal. But, this argument acquires strength from the idea which we have already proved.

There are other arguments, which, though well adapted to the popular mind, and though, in their own nature, sufficiently convincing, are yet not satisfactory to learned men. They are the following:—Miracles suppose a powerful and independent cause; and

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miracles are admitted:—therefore, &c.—Providence leads the attentive observer to see and acknowledge that there is a God.—There is no nation, however uncivilized, which has not admitted the existence of a God.—Atheists have often been convinced, and compelled by conscience expressly to declare, that they should have given glory to God and acknowledged his being.—The desires of the human mind are directed to something infinite. These desires would be vain if there were no God to help our infirmities and to supply all our wants. For they proceed not from our own minds, and are not imaginary, but have been implanted in us by God.

Thus have we proved the first truth,—the existence of God as the independent, wise, and powerful cause of all things.

CHAPTER II.

OF RELIGION.

RELIGION DEFINED—ITS OBJECT, SUBJECTS, AND SUBSTANCE—ITS ACTS, SOURCE, RULE, AND END—PROVINCE OF REASON IN RELIGION.

We come now to treat of the other truth, which is based upon that which we have just been considering, namely, that God must be worshipped. This latter truth is suggested by conscience or by reason, viewed practically, while the former is the dictate of reason, strictly so called.

Let us inquire

1. What religion is.

2. How it flows from reason and conscience as its source,

I. The word religion is not derived from *religare*, as if it meant a duty which we owe to another, in consequence of the tie of obligation by which we are mutually bound. This is the opinion of Lactantius and others. It seems to us to be derived from *relegere*, as Cicero well remarks in his treatise, *de Natura Deorum*. "Those," he says, "who diligently examine and read over and over again what pertains to the worship of the gods, are called religious." The synonymous word in Greek, is *θρησκεία*, from the old verb *τρέω*, signifying to respect, to worship any one, and *δουλεία*, from *δουλεύω*, to serve. In Hebrew, it is called שמירה.

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Religion may properly be defined as that reasonable service by which a man commends himself to God, with the view of obtaining his favour for hope in this life, and for salvation in the life to come. Or it is that acceptable worship which is rendered to God, and comprehends all the duties which intelligent creatures owe to him, in order that they may be happy in the enjoyment of his fellowship.

God is the *exclusive object* of religious worship. The injunction was strictly laid upon the Israelites, "Thou shalt fear the Lord thy God, and serve him," Deut. vi. 13. And our Saviour, in repelling the temptations of Satan, quoted the substance of that very passage, "Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve," Matt. iv. 10. From the fact of our seeking our happiness in a Being infinitely perfect, it is plain, that religion supposes dependence on our part, and a fulness and an all-sufficiency on the part of that Being to meet and supply all our necessities.

Those only are the *subjects* of religion who are endued with reason and with freedom of will; for God requires a rational, voluntary, and affectionate service. The obedience which we render to him must be unconstrained. None of the creatures, therefore, can render this service and obedience, except men and angels.

The *substance* or matter of religion consists of its duties and its acts. God, as we have already said, is the sole object of religious worship; but then, this worship may be rendered either directly or indirectly,—directly, when it is offered to God himself, or indirectly when we do good to our fellow-men for his sake and in obedience to his authority. The duties which have a direct reference to God consist in knowing and acknowledging him, which in Scripture is called ἐπίγνωσις. This recognition of him may be viewed in three lights; *first*, in acknowledging his supreme perfection and excellence, and in ascribing praise and glory to him; *secondly*, in acknowledging him as our Lord, in virtue of his being our creator and preserver, and in obeying him as such; and *thirdly*, in considering him as our chief end, and in devoting to him the supreme affections of our hearts. The Apostle refers to these three in 1 Cor. xiii. 13. We have faith, or the recognition of God as a being possessed of every perfection—charity, which consists in rendering obedience to his will—and hope, or our looking to him as our chief good. These are the duties which have reference directly to God.

Religion includes also the duties which we owe to our fellow-men, and enjoins a strict and conscientious regard to truth in all our intercourse, and to justice in all our transactions with them, and the

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performance of all those acts of kindness which our mutual relationship and dependence require.

The *acts* of religion are either internal, as faith, hope, and love, and consist in cherishing right conceptions of God—in studying a conformity of will and affection to these conceptions—in consecrating all our powers to his service—and in having a regard, in all that we do, to the advancement of his glory; or they are external, or those which have reference to the conduct, but which, at the same time, when not accompanied with and not springing from the former, are not acceptable in the sight of him who looks chiefly on the hearts of his worshippers.

The *form* of religion consists in its *source*, in its *rule*, and in the *end* which it has in view. The *source* from which it springs must be agreeable to the nature of God himself. As he is a spiritual Being, possessed of all power and of all knowledge, he requires sincerity of heart in all who worship him,—he will accept no service but that which flows from love to himself. The *rule* or *standard* of religion is the divine will, whether intimated to us by the dictates of conscience, or made known to us by the written word. The *end* of religion is twofold. In reference to God, it is the promotion of his glory, John xii. 28; 1 Cor. x. 31; Col. iii. 17; 1 Tim. i. 17. In reference to ourselves, it is a regard, in all that we do, to our own eternal happiness in the enjoyment of communion with God.

The question has been raised, whether, in addition to the glory of God, we may, in serving him, consult our own well-being. There are Christians not a few, as well as others, who look to the former, without any regard to the latter, and who maintain, that that service alone is acceptable to God, in which the advancement of his glory is the only object aimed at, and that any other service is obviously of a mercenary and selfish character, and cannot meet his approbation. While some, it is to be feared, advocate this opinion with the view of representing man as controlled in all his actions by the invincible decrees of fate, and as, therefore, an irresponsible agent, others, we believe, are actuated by a different motive, and wish to humble man in the dust, and, with singleness of heart, to glorify God; believing, as they do, that he cannot take pleasure in a service which springs from self-love,—which love they hold to be corrupted and depraved.

Now, this is a question of vital importance, and demands our serious consideration. For, if we are wrong on this point, we are wrong on all;—if the opinion which we hold in regard to the source and end

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of religion be unsound, then the service and worship which we render to God must be worthless, and, if so, then we cannot enjoy his favour. There are some who take a middle course and say, that the glory of God should have the precedence in our regard, and that our own happiness should occupy a secondary and subordinate place.

We admit that, in temporal matters, we must exercise self-denial and submission to the Divine will, although we cannot, any more than Christ himself, expect exemption from the pain and sorrow which this self-denial and submission will occasion. In spiritual matters, likewise, we must not murmur at the procedure of God, but meekly acquiesce in whatever he may be pleased to lay upon us. For, in as far as our eternal happiness is concerned, we know that he should be worshipped by us, even although he should confer no such reward; but we deny that that happiness is to be considered merely in the light of wages, which a servant receives from his master. We hold, on the contrary, that it is, in itself, a manifestation of the Divine glory; and that, therefore, a regard to our own welfare is in no way inconsistent with our rendering to him an acceptable service.

Those who hold a contrary opinion are mistaken in their views of the nature of self-love. They do not distinguish between the *love of human nature and the love of fallen human nature.* It is impossible for man to divest himself of the former, without ceasing to be man; because he cannot hate himself or his own flesh. Nay, the very fact that God loves his creatures and the works of his own hands proves, that we, who derive our being from him, should, in imitation of his example, love ourselves. In his fallen condition, man does not love himself as man—as the creature of God; but he does so for his own sake, and in order to gratify his own evil desires; he seeks salvation in himself and not in God: and, if he worships him at all, he worships him because of some reward which he hopes to receive at his hands.

But they are equally mistaken in their views of the nature of God's service and of the glory which is due to him. Conceiving of him as he is in himself, and not taking into account the relation in which he stands to his creatures, they believe that he is to be worshipped only as a Being infinite in all his perfections. His glory, however, consists not only in his possessing the perfections of the divine essence, but chiefly in his having those which have reference to his rational creatures,—such as goodness and mercy. If, therefore, he be glorious in respect of the kindness which he bestows upon us, and if he is to be worshipped as a God of goodness, it necessarily follows, that he

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is to be worshipped with a view to our own happiness, which is the noblest exercise and the brightest manifestation of his love. Scripture is very clear on this point. God requires to be worshipped as the "rewarder of them that diligently seek him," Heb. xi. 6. "I am," he said to Abraham, "thy exceeding great reward," Gen. xv. 1. "I said not unto the seed of Jacob, Seek ye me in vain," Isa. xlv. 19. "In the keeping of God's judgments there is great reward," Psal. xix. 11.

They are mistaken, moreover, in regard to our real sentiments on this subject. They suppose our opinion to be, that God should be worshipped on account of something distinct from God himself, just as a hired servant works for a stipulated sum. But we say no such thing.

(1.) We do not hold that God is to be served merely because of the reward that is attached to his service; we say, that this reward is to be looked to for his own sake, and with the view of enjoying his fellowship.

(2.) The love which we have for ourselves naturally prompts us thus to consult our own happiness. The end which we have in view is inseparably connected with the other and higher end of religion, and must not be overlooked. A regard to our own happiness is not incompatible with God's service, because he himself has made the one consequent upon the other—because purity of heart is well-pleasing in his sight—and because he cannot but regard with approbation those who thus worship him.

(3.) This end, originating, as it does, not in corrupt self-love, but in that of which it is impossible for us to divest ourselves, neither can nor should be lost sight of. We cannot be regardless of our own chief good—our own highest happiness; for we cannot deny ourselves. Yet we would do so if we did not consult this end. As God, therefore, has implanted in us such a desire, such a love of ourselves, we are perfectly justified in seeking to have that desire gratified, and, under the influence of that love, to secure our happiness. There is, indeed, a love of another kind, which leads man to gratify his own corrupt desires; but to love himself in the sense we have already explained, and to long for happiness in communion with God, is and must be acceptable to him.

(4.) It is a good and lawful end, because it is perfectly agreeable to the will of God. Its conformity to his will cannot be called in question. He has sanctioned it by rewards and punishments, and thus shewn, that it is his design that we should be stirred up by these

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to attend to our own interests and to seek our own happiness; while Scripture expressly declares, that he desires to be worshipped as the rewarder of them that seek him, and that in the keeping of his commandments there is a great reward.

(5.) It is a good and lawful end, because it reflects glory on God. It manifests his justice, in bestowing the promised reward, and his goodness, in conferring benefits. Therefore, as the divine glory thus discovers itself in our happiness, the desire of both, on our part, should go together. We virtually deny his justice, when we serve him without any regard to our own happiness.

(6.) It is a good and lawful end, because it is agreeable to the relation which subsists between God and man. In that relation he is to be viewed not only as a Being infinitely perfect, but as our chief good, in whose fellowship our happiness consists. But in this relation he cannot be worshipped by us without our having a regard to that end. For as the chief good he should be the object of our love, but this he cannot be, unless we have a desire after our own happiness.

(7.) It is not only a good and lawful, but also a necessary end, because love to God, which is the source or foundation of religion, cannot exist without it. For the object of love is something good, viewed not only absolutely but in relation to myself. I can entertain no feelings of affection towards an object which is not good in respect to me. Now, if God were merely in an absolute sense good, I might, indeed, shew forth his glory; but I could not fix my affections upon him, if his goodness had no relation whatever to myself.

(8.) Without this end, there could be no room for hope. Yet hope is of the very essence of religion. The acknowledging of the truth which is after godliness is represented in Scripture as connected with the hope of eternal life, Tit. i. 2.

(9.) Mercenary service is altogether different from that of which we have now spoken; for it is laborious and toilsome, and has no reference to him who bestows the reward, but only to the reward itself. But, in the question of our happiness in the service of God, religion is inseparably joined with the enjoyment of his fellowship; and, therefore, in aiming to secure our happiness, we seek nothing apart from God, but God himself and the promotion of his glory.

II. We shall now show how religion flows from reason as its source. In doing so three things are to be proved.

1. That God desires to be worshipped by his rational creatures.

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2. That God must be worshipped, and that we are bound to worship him.

3. That God must be rightly worshipped.

1. That God desires to be worshipped by his rational creatures. This we establish by the following arguments which reason readily suggests.

(*a*) As God loves himself, he desires that his rational creatures should manifest and acknowledge the glory of his perfection, and, consequently, that they should worship him as a perfect Being and as the great first cause of all.

(*b*) He loves his intelligent creatures,—the workmanship of his own hands, and, of necessity, wishes to be loved by them in return.

(*c*) By right of creation, he is their Lord, on whom they continually depend. There must therefore be some mark or sign of his supremacy on the one hand and of their dependence on the other. The only sign of these is the moral law, the giving of which testifies sovereignty on his part, and the keeping of which, on the part of his creatures, testifies their dependence upon him.

(*d*) God is an all-sufficient being, and the chief good, and wishes to be loved and acknowledged by his intelligent creatures, in order that they may become partakers of his goodness.

(*e*) He has endowed them with faculties, such as the understanding and the will, which enable them to know and to glorify him. These faculties he would not have bestowed upon them, if he had not intended them for his own service and worship. But, because he has given them, he has not done so in vain, but for a certain purpose,—that men, namely, should employ them in acknowledging and worshipping him.

2. But we said that we are bound to worship God. This may easily be shown from the relation that subsists between him and us.

(*a*) He presents himself to us as a Being possessed of every natural and moral perfection; and, from this view of his character, there springs a natural obligation to admire, esteem, and glorify him.

(*b*) He is our Lord by right of creation, and, as such, we are bound to render obedience to his will, to the extent to which it is made known to us. He has revealed his law, as a sign at once of his own sovereignty and of our subjection; and it is incumbent upon us to do homage to that law, and thus to shew our submission to his authority and our dependence upon his power.

(*c*) He presents himself, moreover, as the chief good, whose fellowship constitutes our highest happiness, and therefore it is imperative

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upon us to love and to serve him in the manner which he himself prescribes.

3. Reason, moreover, shews, that God must be *duly* and *properly* worshipped. For, otherwise, our service cannot be acceptable to him. If it be asked, what true religion or the proper worship of God is, and how it is characterized, we reply, it must be agreeable to the nature and will of him who is the object of worship, and to the relation which subsists between him and us. God is a spirit, and we are his rational creatures,—and that alone is true religion which corresponds to both of these. Its leading feature is its conformity to the divine will, which is uniformly good and right, and the knowledge of which we derive from reason and revelation.

Reason, however, is of itself an insufficient source of Theology.

1*st*, Because fallen man cannot make the right use of it.

2*d*, Because, even although he could do so, it cannot bring him to the knowledge of the only way of salvation.

1*st*, In regard to the moral inability of man to use his reason aright as a proof of the insufficiency of that principle, we say,

(*a*) That in his fallen condition, he cannot deduce, without error, even those truths which reason teaches. The fault does not lie in reason's not embracing and teaching these truths, but in men's inability, in consequence of the corruption induced by the fall, to use reason as they ought,—not in their being physically incapacitated for this, (for they are endued with reason—they are possessed of faculties, which, in essence, are not depraved,) but in being hindered, by a fault exclusively their own, from employing these in the proper way, —in judging, not according to the plain dictates of reason, but hastily and according to the feelings and judgments of others. All this is inherent in fallen man, and prevents him from rightly using the power which God has bestowed upon him, and from attaining an accurate knowledge of the truths which it teaches,—a hinderance, however, we repeat, not inherent in reason itself, but in him who in this manner abuses it. For, in regard to its *essence*, it is not corrupted or depraved, and conclusions drawn from it are not false. Goodness cannot give birth to error. It was God himself who kindled in man the light of reason, and therefore the cause of its insufficiency is in man himself.

(*b*) In the *second* place, he cannot use his reason aright, because he cannot deduce from it truths for the satisfaction and peace of his own mind. Although, even in his fallen condition, it still teaches him many truths, it yet wants that clearness and convincing power, which

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are necessary to remove all doubt and suppress all anxiety. The light which it emits is not so strong as to pierce the clouds which sometimes settle upon the mind, and therefore it is not infallible.

(*c*) In the *third* place, He cannot use his reason aright, because, in as far as his actions are concerned, he is unable to conform them to the rule which it prescribes. It does not furnish him with motives sufficiently powerful to follow after virtue. Being exceedingly prone to sin, the motives which can enable him to resist his natural tendency must be strong indeed. But any which reason holds out are too weak, and, in the matter of salvation, the favour of God, and a blessed immortality, are incapable of carrying conviction to his mind.

2*d*, But, even although he could use reason aright, it would still be insufficient, because it cannot point out to him the way of salvation. It plainly declares, indeed, that he is a transgressor, and that he has forfeited the divine favour,—that God, who is just and holy, cannot, without a full exhibition and vindication of these attributes, re-admit the sinner into his fellowship. But it breathes not a whisper as to the way in which this manifestation may be made, and how, in consistency with these attributes, a reconciliation can be effected between the parties at variance. This is a problem too difficult for reason to solve. Revelation alone clears up the mystery. It tells us, that the Son of God was made flesh, in order that he might vindicate the divine holiness and satisfy the demands of divine justice. This wonderful scheme was foolishness to the Gentiles and a stumbling-block to the Jews. This was the mystery to be revealed by God alone. The name of Christ was to be the only name given under heaven whereby we can be saved, Acts iv. 12. He alone was to be the way, the truth, and the life, without whom no man can come to the Father, John xiv. 6.

But then, if this be true, what will become of those who have been and still are destitute of revelation? Will those who have been born in a land on which its blessed light has never shone eternally perish? This question has occupied the attention both of philosophers and divines. By some of these the heathen have all been consigned to condemnation; while others, adopting a milder view, believe that God, who will render to every man according to the means of salvation which he has enjoyed, will look for less from those to whom little has been given, and more from those on whom more has been bestowed. This latter was the opinion held by many of the early fathers, as Justin Martyr, and Clemens Alexandrinus,

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and by Christians of more recent times, as Zuingle, Æcolampadius, and Bullinger, not to mention the Remonstrants. Yet they have not all come to the same conclusion on this subject. One party maintained, that the heathen must have had, in some way, communion with Christ, who is said in Scripture to be "the true light that lighteth every man that cometh into the world," John i. 9. Others held that some of them were saved for the sake of Christ, although in a way unknown to them,—either because they trusted in the divine mercy leaving it to God to exercise his justice and holiness according to his own good pleasure, or because Christ was, in some extraordinary way, revealed to them in the present life, at the hour of death, or when Christ went and preached the Gospel to the spirits in prison.

Notwithstanding this diversity of opinion, however, the honour due to the grace and merits of the Saviour was carefully preserved. It was admitted by all, that without him none could be saved. At the same time, they understood the statements of Scripture regarding the heathen, who live without God, without Christ, and without hope, not in an absolute, but in a comparative and restricted sense, like those regarding the superiority of the Old Testament dispensation in comparison with the New,—as when it is said, that heaven and immortality were subjects involved in darkness under the Old compared with the information on these points contained in the New. By others, again, it is maintained, that the heathen who have never heard of Christ will be saved by reason alone; because they know the fundamental articles of religion, namely, that there is a God, that it is our duty to worship him, that his worship consists in loving and serving him, that sins cannot be forgiven unless they be repented of, and that there is another state of existence beyond the present. This is a question, however, on which we should not exercise our curiosity; and it would have been better had divines either refrained from discussing it or conducted their investigation in a more becoming spirit. We will not pronounce an opinion on the matter, but will leave it to be determined by the justice and mercy of God. This was what Paul himself did. He did not take it upon him to say what would happen to the heathen if they followed the light of reason; he only shewed that, in not making a proper use of it, they did not live agreeably to the knowledge of God which they thereby might have had, and that they were, in consequence, guilty before him.

But, if some of the heathen have been saved, (which we neither

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affirm nor deny), then they were either proselytes, like Cornelius, or they had some general knowledge of a Saviour, as God, in a manner unknown to us, chose to reveal him to them, and, therefore, they believed generally in some person to be sent, at some time or other, by God. This, as we learn from Plato, was an opinion which some of them did entertain. But we give no decision in regard to those of them who were completely ignorant of Christ and who died in their sins. This much we know, that by reason alone none of them could be saved. We know that there is salvation only in Christ;—that, except by the knowledge of him, there can be no deliverance from the wrath to come. What amount of knowledge is indispensable it is not for us to determine. We are aware that there was a vast difference between the knowledge which men had of a Saviour before and after Christ's manifestation in the flesh. Although, prior to this event, the Jews had a revelation, how much more clear was it afterwards! Still, notwithstanding this difference, it is true, that no one could be saved without some knowledge, however imperfect it might be, of divine grace, and of a Mediator. Whether, therefore, God may exact a less degree of knowledge and faith from the heathen than from the Jews who lived before the coming of Christ, it is altogether incompetent for us to say. We leave the matter with God himself. As his proceedings in regard to them have not been revealed,—as it has not been made known what amount of knowledge of the Messiah is required of them, our safer course is to form no definite conclusion regarding them at all. Of this we may rest satisfied, that reason alone cannot lead man to the knowledge of the way of salvation, and that by reason alone none can be saved, unless God, of his great mercy, interpose for their help.

What, then, it may be asked, is the use of reason? We answer, that it serves many important purposes. It imparts to us the knowledge of God as the creator, the preserver, and judge of the world. It tells us what is true and false—what is morally good and evil—and furnishes various motives for the cultivation of virtue, and for the avoidance of vice. It is useful in the management and defence of the interests of society, and directs men in framing laws, cultivating arts, and discharging duties which contribute to the public weal. It prepares us for revelation, as the other source of religion, and shews us the necessity of it by convincing us of its own insufficiency for salvation, and of our utter hopelessness in this matter, unless a revelation be given. It presupposes to a certain extent that a revelation will be given. It goes farther; and, by arguments drawn from

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the goodness, long suffering, and mercy of God toward our race, proves that a revelation is not only possible and necessary, but probable, and that God would not have exercised his power in giving it, if it had not been his design thereby to lead us to the knowledge and attainment of salvation. God has not made man in vain, but that his own glory should be manifested by him—an end, however, which could not have been reached, unless he had vouchsafed assistance to him in this way. It enables man, moreover, to distinguish between a revelation that is true and false, and assists him in understanding it. It is, in short, an excellent gift, conferred upon us by God, for the preservation and defence of which we cannot be too thankful; and it is our duty to use it aright, and to call in its assistance in every case in which its help is needful.

CHAPTER III.

OF THE SCRIPTURES.

SCRIPTURES DEFINED—NUMBER AND DIVISION OF BOOKS—LANGUAGES IN WHICH THEY WERE WRITTEN—THE FORM OF THE LETTERS—VOWEL POINTS—REASONS WHY REVELATION WAS COMMITTED TO WRITING—NECESSITY OF A WRITTEN REVELATION—THE CANON OF SCRIPTURE CONTENTS OF REVELATION—TO WHOM AND HOW MADE—PROOFS OF THE DIVINITY OF SCRIPTURE—APOCRYPHAL BOOKS.

We come now to speak of Revelation, the other source from which our theological system is derived; and, in doing so, we shall observe the following order:—We shall first explain what revelation is. It is called, by way of eminence, Sacred Scripture,—the writing, or writings. "Search the Scriptures," John v. 39; "Hath not the Scripture said," &c., John vii. 42; "From a child thou hast known the Scriptures," 2 Tim. iii. 15. The Jews called it *meketeb*,—a designation by which it is presented to us as committed to writing, as superior in worth and excellence, and necessity, to all other writings extant, and deserving to be called emphatically *the Scriptures*, as if there were none but itself. For the same reason, it is usually called the *Bible* or the *Book*, although the world teems with volumes. It is supposed that Paul refers to the sacred writings then in existence in the injunction which he gives Timothy, 2 Tim. iv. 13.

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By Sacred Scripture we understand the collection of books written by men divinely inspired, and designed for the use of the Church.

In order more fully to explain this definition,

I. We must know what these books are.

II. We must prove that they and they alone contain a revelation of the will of God.

I. Under the first of these are comprehended,

(*a*) The knowledge of the books in regard to their *number* and to their *division*.

(*b*) The knowledge of what is connected with the *writing* of the books.

(*c*) The knowledge of what is called the canon of Scripture.

(*a*) There are thirty-nine books in the Old Testament and twenty-seven in the New. Some of the Jewish writers say that in the Old Testament there are twenty-four; others, that there are twenty-two. Not that they have fewer than we, but that they arrange them in a different order; for they reckon as one the books of Samuel, the books of Kings, and the books of Chronicles, whereas we count each of these as two separate books. In like manner, also, they unite Ezra and Nehemiah, Judges and Ruth, the Lamentations and Prophecies of Jeremiah. In this way, they have twenty-two books; for they count the twelve minor prophets as one book, which they call simply the *Book of the Prophets*, Acts vii. 42. Others, again, reckon twenty-four,—separating the book of Ruth from that of Judges, and the Lamentations of Jeremiah from his Prophecies. There is no discrepancy, therefore, in the number of the books, but only in the mode of arranging them. Of those in the New Testament it is not necessary for us to speak,—the number being just what is there presented to us.

The Scriptures are commonly divided by Christians into the books of the Old and New Testament. This division is already of long standing. We find it mentioned in 2 Cor. iii. 6, 14, where Paul speaks of the ministers of the *New Testament*, and of the reading of the *Old Testament*. The books of the Old Testament are so called, not as if they contained nothing except what related to the Old Testament or the ancient dispensation; but because they were written during the existence of that dispensation, and because the revelation which they contain was then given by God. The books of the New Testament are to be understood in the same sense.

The Jews, however, distinguished the books of the Old Testament

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into the *Law*, the *Prophets*, and the *Hagiographa* or Holy Writings. We do not know how old this division is; one thing is certain, that our Lord made mention of the *Law and the Prophets*. "The law and the prophets," he says, "were until John," Luke xvi. 16. This language is not to be understood as implying that he distinguished the Old Testament into the *Law and the Prophets*—for he sometimes spoke of it as consisting of the *Law, the Prophets, and the Psalms*, Luke xxiv 44,—either because he wished it to be understood, that they contained many things that referred to the Messiah, or because he alluded to the Jewish division, into the *Law*, namely, the *Prophets*, and the *Holy Writings*. The Psalms were ranked by him among the *Hagiographa*, because of the many things they contain regarding the Messiah; not as if they should be separated from the prophetical writings, but because they deserved to be specially spoken of on account of the information they give us of Christ. But this is a matter of inferior moment.

By the Law, we understand the five books of Moses. The writings of the Prophets, again, are divided into those of the *former* and *latter*, the *former* comprehending the historical books, and the *latter*, those which were written by Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, &c. The Hagiographa or Holy Writings are those which contain the exposition of doctrine and the inculcation of duty, as the book of Job, Psalms, Proverbs, and Ecclesiastes, and are so called, because they were written, not in the spirit of prophecy, in the proper sense of that expression,—for this spirit carries a man without himself, either in an ecstasy or by dream, —but under the spirit of illumination, and because they contain more of what is doctrinal and practical than the writings of the Prophets. It may be said, perhaps, that many of the Psalms, as well as the book of Daniel, contain clear and express predictions, and yet the Jews rank these among the Holy Writings and not among those of the Prophets. Their reason for doing so was not because they regarded Daniel as a courtier rather than a prophet, (for that name was given to him only by the later Jews,) but because, like the Psalms, his writings are chiefly doctrinal and practical, and because he and David were not prophets, strictly so called. For, although God revealed to them things to come, they did not, like the others, communicate these to the people. They were not commissioned by God to do so. They were, therefore, *extraordinary* prophets. And hence it is that their books are not enumerated among those of the prophets.

There is another division of the books of the Old Testament into the *Legal* or *Historical*, as those of Moses, Judges, Samuel, Kings,

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and Chronicles,—the *Poetical* or *Moral*, as Job, Psalms, Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, and Song of Solomon,—and the *Prophetical*, including the greater and the less, among which we also reckon Daniel.

The books of the New Testament, again, we divide into the *Historical*, as the four Gospels and the Acts of the Apostles,—the *Dogmatical*, whether theoretical or practical, as the letters of Paul and the other seven catholic epistles,—and one *Prophetical*, or the book of the Revelations of John.

(*b.*) The writers of these books were the holy and divinely inspired men whose names they bear. Unless the contrary can be shewn, reason and the nature of things require that they be regarded in this light. Some of the books, indeed, as those of Judges, Kings, and Chronicles, are of uncertain authorship; but, if there be, in regard to the others, no objection of this kind, we must come to the conclusion which we have just stated.

The principal difficulty in this matter is in regard to the books of Moses. Many deny that they were written by him. They hold generally, that the events and transactions there recorded were committed to writing by the prophets; but that their writings were lost, and that the facts which they narrated were at length collected by the Scribes, and have come down to us only in an abridged form.

We believe, however, that the books were really written by Moses, although we do not deny, at the same time, that additions were made by way of explanation. The last chapter of Deuteronomy, for instance, was written by some one subsequent to the time of Moses. We find names, also, which seem to belong to a later age than that in which he lived, Gen. xiii. and xiv., compared with Josh. xiv. The eulogium, moreover, on Moses, in which mention is made of his singular meekness, (Numb. xii. 3,) does not seem to have been written by himself, (for this would have been inconsistent with his general character,) but by some other individual. But these things do not militate against the fact of his being the author of the books ascribed to him. (*a*) It is evident that he wrote the laws contained in them. "Moses," it is said, "wrote all the words of the Lord," Exod. xxiv. 4. "The Lord said unto Moses, Write thou these words," Exod. xxxiv. 27. "And it came to pass, when Moses had made an end of writing the words of this law in a book," Deut. xxxi. 24. He is said to have written the laws, Josh. i. 7, 8. Reason and the very nature of the case required that this should be done; because these laws, being more than the memory could retain or tradition preserve, could not otherwise have been preserved entire.

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(β) We know from Deut. xxxi. 22, that the song recorded in the 32d chapter was written by Moses. (γ) In regard to the achievements and fortunes of the Israelites in Egypt and in the wilderness, God wished especially that the first war with Amalek should be committed to writing by Moses, Exod. xvii. 14; whence we may conclude, in regard to other events, that God wished them all to be recorded, and the remembrance of them to be thus kept up. (δ) The journey of the Israelites through the desert is expressly said to have been consigned by Moses to writing, Numb. xxxiii. 2; and why should we not believe that the other particulars of their history were also written by him? (ε) Besides, the laws could scarcely have been written without enumerating those circumstances which often gave occasion for enacting them, and, therefore, it is likely that Moses wrote the laws with all the particular circumstances which gave rise to them. (ζ) The books are called, by way of eminence, *the books of Moses*, Neh. xiii. 1; Ezra vi. 18, and in the New Testament Moses is said to have written concerning Christ, Mark xii. 26; John v. 46. (η) We know no reason why these writings should not be ascribed to him, for they bear his name. But how can the contrary be proved? It may be objected that he writes in the third person,—Moses said this and Moses said that. But this objection has no force; because with the best historians of antiquity, as Thucydides, Xenophon, Julius Cæsar, it was customary to write in this way. Therefore we infer, that Moses may justly be reckoned the author of those books that are attributed to him.

In regard to the language in which the books of the Old Testament were written, it was, with a few exceptions, the Hebrew, not because it was more sacred, and more acceptable to God than others, —an idea savouring of superstition, (no language having any intrinsic sacredness,)—but because it was the vernacular language of the writers. (God usually accommodates himself in this matter to the circumstances of the people whom he addresses, and for whose sake he condescends to give a revelation, in order that his communications may be understood. For the same reason, also, the New Testament was written in Greek, because that language was at that time in common use.) Some parts of the Old Testament were written in Chaldee. See Jer. x. 11, which was so written, in order that the Jews might use it against the idolaters among the Babylonians. In the books of Ezra, Nehemiah, and Daniel, some portions which relate to the Babylonians and others, among whom the Israelites were called to sojourn, are written in Chaldee.

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The books of the New Testament were written, as we have already said, in Greek,—the language then in general use. In regard to some of them, indeed, it is questioned whether they were not written in another language,—the Gospel by Matthew, for instance, and the Epistle to the Hebrews. According to some, they were written in the Hebrew or Syro-Chaldaic. But there is no ground for this opinion, for they bear all the marks of original writings, and not of versions. There are quotations, moreover, in Matthew from the Septuagint, which would not have been made, had that Gospel been written in Hebrew.

The books of the Old Testament now extant were written, as is well known, in Syriac, or quadrate, as they are called, *i. e.* square characters. It has been questioned whether these existed in ancient times among the Israelites, and not rather the Phœnician or Samaritan, in which the Samaritan manuscript now exists in its revised form. On this point philologists are divided in opinion, some arguing for the most ancient or the square-formed characters of the present day, and others, for the Samaritan, as Drusius and Cappell, who say that the former were not employed until after the departure of the Jews from Babylon, and that the latter are the most ancient of all. This opinion seems to us the true one, for the following reasons. In the *first* place, There is a resemblance between the Samaritan and the Greek characters. Now the Greeks received the letters of their language from the Samaritans through Cadmus in the time of Moses. Those, therefore, are the most ancient characters which are like the Greek; and, upon comparison, it will be found that these are the Samaritan.

In the *second* place, The Samaritan manuscript was in existence before the Jews left Babylon and was written in the characters undoubtedly in use at that time. Had these characters not been in use at that time, the Assyrian would have been employed. But they were in use, as we find in 2 Kings xvii. 37. When the new settlers in Samaria were visited with plagues from God, a Jewish priest was sent to them from Babylon, with the books of the law which he was to communicate to the people.

In the *third* place, The square-formed characters which we have in our Bibles are called Assyrian, because they proceeded from that nation, and were afterwards employed in the time of the Babylonish captivity, when the Jews learned that language from those among whom they lived in exile. The advocates of the opposite opinion, however, appeal to the names and forms of the letters in the alphabet, and maintain that they were called Aleph, Beth, &c., because their mean-

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ings answered to their names, (Beth, for instance, signifying a house, and another letter meaning something else), and that if this be admitted, these characters must necessarily be the most ancient. But we reply, this does not hold true in every respect, for the Samaritan letters are more like them, and more properly suit the circumstances of the case. Such an opinion, moreover, rests upon a weak and superstitious foundation. For another reason may be assigned for the names given to the letters. Aleph, for example, signifies a leader, and Tau denotes that which closes or shuts in, because these respectively are the first and last letters of the alphabet. Other letters, again, have received their names either from their sound and its reduplication, as Mem, Nun, or because the first letter has sufficient power in itself, as Beth, Daleth, &c. This argument, therefore, is insufficient for the purpose for which it is employed. The question, besides, is not one of such moment as to induce us to dwell any longer upon it.

The origin of the vowel points, as these are found in our Bibles, is a matter of dispute among philosophers and divines. Some maintain that those now in use, as well as the whole system of punctuation, were derived from Moses, or the prophets, or Ezra, or from the men of the chief synagogue, and that, therefore, they possess divine authority. This opinion was held and defended by Buxtorf. Others, again, say, that they are of more recent origin, and that they were invented 500 years after Christ by the Masorites, or Scribes of the school of Tiberias. Cappell has laboured to prove this in his *Arcanum Punctuationis Revelatum*, as Rabbi Elias Levita also did among the Jews.

The question, let it be particularly observed, is not whether the Hebrew language originally had vowels,—for there can be no language without them; neither is the question whether it had any marks by which the vowels were designated,—for these also are absolutely necessary, inasmuch as, without them, language would be involved in obscurity and doubt; but the question is concerning the vowel points at present in use, the whole system of punctuation, and the rules that relate to it. Now it seems to us that they are more recent in their origin than the time of Ezra or of the prophets, although we cannot determine when they appeared. Our reasons for thinking so are these:—

In the *first* place, It cannot be proved that these points were known to the ancients. Nay, the seventy interpreters did not use them, as a comparison of the original text with the Greek versions

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shews. But, if they had been in use, the seventy would undoubtedly have availed themselves of them; and that they did not use them may be proved from many passages of the New Testament, of which they have given an incorrect version.

Secondly, The Jews never used pointed Bibles in their synagogues, —they do not use them even at the present day, but regard such as corrupted. But if these points had always existed, they would always have had pointed Bibles and always employed them.

Thirdly, If the system of punctuation be carefully examined, it will be seen to be only a subtle invention of curious and idle men, who have employed upon it much skill and labour. The very accuracy in the points shews that it is an ingeniously contrived scheme. They have not, like others, five vowels, but they have ten Scheras, and all of them tied down by certain rules. Such an elaborately formed scheme as this does not bear upon it the impress of antiquity, which is characterised by simplicity and artlessness, but is rather the work of men of more recent times,—the Masorites among the Jews.

Fourthly, At the time when the ancient readings called Keri and Ketib were collected, these points were not in existence. These readings have no reference whatever to the points, which they would have had if points had been in use;—they would not, indeed, in that case, have been employed at all; for they were designed to answer the purpose of points, namely, to define the reading, and to insure accuracy in pronunciation.

Fifthly, The primitive Christians, as Jerome and Origen, who used the Hebrew language, knew nothing of these points; for, in the pronunciation of words, they substituted different vowels, as *a* for *e*. * The points, therefore, are not of ancient but of modern origin. Nor is this at all to the prejudice of Scripture, as if, in their absence, it were involved in uncertainty. Although the Masorites may have erred in adopting them, they, nevertheless, always adopted the reading which was commonly received, and which was marked by the vowels then in existence, and have thus left us the Bible as it was then read and pronounced. They have not, therefore, acted arbitrarily; for they had marks by which the reading was defined when it was ambiguous. They have employed only a new form, and laid down ingeniously enough certain rules of punctuation. The reading uniformly remains the same. From

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* See Origen's *Hexapla*, by Montfaucon.

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the punctuation now in use, therefore, we should not depart, unless compelled by necessity. Some errors, indeed, may have crept in; but these are very few in number, so that the received reading is very rarely wrong.

The reasons which led the sacred writers to put on record the revelation vouchsafed to them, and not to rest satisfied with audibly proclaiming it, were these:—*First*, That they might carry out the will and the original intention of God in giving a Revelation,—namely, that it might be preserved. *Secondly*, That they might leave to believers in every future age a perfect rule of faith and duty, which could be done only by committing it to writing.

Papists hold a different opinion, however, and say, that they wrote only occasionally and at random; that they did not write for the purpose we have just mentioned, but only that they might avail themselves of the opportunity presented to them; and that they wrote no more than the occasion required,—an opinion which goes to impugn the perfection of Scripture, and so to make out and justify the necessity of supplementing its defects by their own traditions.

In opposition to them, we maintain that the sacred penmen were moved to commit revelation to writing by the express will of God, and not occasionally and at random,—and that they did so for the purpose of leaving us the knowledge of saving truth which our circumstances required. This may be inferred from the eagerness with which they seized upon the opportunities presented to them.

Now the divine will, in this matter, was made known to them in various ways, in some instances even by express command, Exod. xvii. 14; Deut. xxxi. 19; thus clearly shewing what God's design was; namely, that the revelation which he gave should be put upon record and transmitted in an uncorrupted form to posterity. From his giving an express injunction, therefore, in particular instances, we may safely infer what his will was in regard to the whole. But there was given besides a general commission to the Apostles, Matt. xxviii. 19. This commission they were to fulfil by word or by letter, 2 Thess. ii. 2. They were bound by it to communicate the will of God both by writing and by preaching, and might reasonably conclude that it was the will of God that the whole of his revelation should be put upon record, partly from his design in giving it, that men, namely, might have at all times a rule to guide them in matters of faith, and partly from his command, in certain cases, to commit to writing the things which he revealed. They not only acted but wrote under a divine impulse. "Holy men of God spake as they were

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moved by the Holy Ghost," 2 Pet. i. 21. "All Scripture is given by inspiration of God," 2 Tim. iii. 16.

The sacred writers did not confine themselves to the opportunities which were presented to them, but sometimes addressed letters to the churches, with the view of communicating instruction in divine truth. This is evident from the preface to the Gospel by Luke, and from the language of Paul, Rom. i. 11. In doing so, they, doubtless, obeyed the will of God, which was, that the Church might be put in possession of a perfect standard of faith and duty. (*a.*) We have various passages of Scripture in proof of this. "But these are written that ye might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that, believing, ye might have life through his name," John xx. 31. "Whatsoever things were written aforetime were written for our learning, that we, through patience and comfort of the Scriptures, might have hope," Rom. xv. 4. "All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness," 2 Tim. iii. 16, 17. (*b.*) The Apostle (2 Thess. ii. 2) speaks of *word* and *letter* as embracing the same truths, and gives us to understand that he and his brethren spoke nothing else than what they wrote. (*c.*) The design of their writing, or rather of their revelation, was the instruction of men, in all ages, in those things that pertained to salvation, which could not be done in any other way. Scripture, as we now have it, is perfect as a rule of faith; and is so either by chance or by divine instigation. But the former is absurd. It was therefore committed to writing, that the sacred penmen might thus implement the will of God and leave for the benefit of the Church a record of all that is necessary in regard to both faith and practice.

Papists, however, object and say, that, if such had been the design of the Apostles, they would have left a system of theology, comprehending in it those truths that are necessary to salvation; whereas they have only given us letters which they wrote when occasion called them to do so. This argument has no force. It does not matter in what form these truths were written, provided they were correctly written. The circumstance of their being embodied in the form of familiar letters does not prove that those by whom they were penned were not moved by God to write for the purpose which we have mentioned. The epistolary form, on account of its familiarity and simplicity, presented peculiar facilities in communicating divine truth. But Paul does systematize. In his Epistle to the Romans, he treats of the misery of man—of his deliverance from that misery by Christ—of

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justification by faith—of the obedience due to God—of all the blessings of the covenant of grace—of every thing, in short, that pertains to salvation, and that, too, in didactic, controversial, and practical order.

From what we have said we may easily learn the final causes why God wished the revelation he gave to be committed to writing. These were—(*a.*) That the doctrine of salvation might be preserved uncorrupted, which could not be conveniently done otherwise than by putting it upon record. We know, by experience, that oral tradition is liable to many changes. A treacherous memory, the prejudices to which the human mind is naturally subject, and a variety of other causes, might have introduced corruptions in points of doctrine. (*b.*) That believers in every age might have a firm foundation on which to rest their faith. For, although the doctrine revealed might in itself be pure, they could not be certain of this, unless it were committed to writing, because it might be corrupted in the course of its oral transmission from one generation to another. (*c.*) That, in harmony with God's method of procedure in the economy of grace, believers might be brought to salvation. They are called to depend in this matter, not on men, but on God himself and his Holy Spirit; but this object could not have been attained without a written revelation of the divine will. It is one of their privileges, that they do not depend for their knowledge of divine things on any man, but that they are all taught of God himself, Isa. liv. 13; Jer. xxxi. 34; John vi. 45. But, if the will of God had not been committed to record, they would have been under the necessity of relying on the tradition and submitting to the authority of men. (*d.*) That they might have an infallible standard by which to distinguish between truth and error. But they would have had no such standard, if divine revelation had not been transmitted to them in the form of a written record. (*e.*) That saving truth might thus be more correctly and easily propagated, and that men might be turned to God, by having in their hands the Sacred Volume in which they might safely confide as a revelation from heaven.

Papists deny this necessity. With the exception of Hosius, one of their cardinals, who went so far as to say that it would have been better for the Church if revelation had not been written, they all admit its utility. But they deny its necessity, and their object in doing so is to subject men to the authority of the Romish Church, and to make them dependent upon its oral traditions.

But let us see what the state of the question between them and us

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really is. Let it be observed, that we do not maintain a written revelation to have been at all times equally important and necessary. We hold that it was so when the Church had advanced to maturity; but, when the Church was yet in its infancy, when in the time of the patriarchs and prophets, and of Christ and his Apostles, the truths of religion were communicated by the teachers' living voice, we readily admit that writing was less necessary. The objection of the Papists, therefore, founded on this latter case, does not apply to us.

We maintain not an absolute but a hypothetical necessity,—in other words, we hold that, if God was not pleased to instruct men individually by the inspiration of the Holy Ghost, a written revelation was indispensable. There are only two ways by which we can be safely brought to the knowledge of saving truth,—by immediate revelation, namely, and by the written word. When the former ceases, we say that the latter must be resorted to. We admit, indeed, that Scripture cannot be understood without the agency of the Holy Spirit; but we say, at the same time, that there is no such thing now as immediate revelation; and on this ground, therefore, we assert the necessity of a written record of the divine will,—a necessity arising out of the reasons which led God to vouchsafe a revelation at all. We have already seen, that doctrinal truth, unless it had been written, could not have been preserved in its purity, and that God in giving us a revelation designed that we should have an uncorrupted standard of faith. And hence arises the necessity for which we contend. Besides, God himself has given a proof of this necessity, in moving men to write, and in their actually doing so in obedience to his will.

We defined Scripture to be a collection of sacred books written by divinely inspired men for the necessary use of the Church. We now proceed to consider it in the light of a Canon—that is, an authoritative collection of writings which are to be regarded by us as the rule of our faith and practice.

The origin of the sacred Canon is to a certain extent involved in uncertainty. The books of the Old Testament are commonly supposed by Jews and Christians to have been collected and arranged by Ezra after the Babylonish captivity. This opinion, though resting on no sure foundation, nevertheless commends itself by its probability. The Canon could not have been formed before his time, because all the prophets had not then made their appearance and fulfilled their commission. After his time, none was better fitted for the work than he. According to tradition, the Canon was formed by him; and we know that the sacred books, whatever they were, began

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to be read publicly in his day. In the time of Josephus, the Jewish historian, it is certain that the Canon was in existence. In his treatise against Apion, he makes mention of twenty-two books, namely, the five books of Moses, thirteen prophetical, and four poetical books. In the days of Christ and of his Apostles there was a collection of the sacred writings. Our Lord frequently alludes to it, and presupposes that it was in the possession of the Jews. He also distinguished the books into the Law, the Prophets, and the Hagiographa or Holy Writings. Paul, besides, admits their existence, when he says, that to the Jews "were committed the oracles of God," Rom. iii. 2. The origin of the Canon, therefore, may with all safety be ascribed to Ezra and to those who assisted him. Still it is not to be denied that some portions were afterwards added, especially a few of the Psalms, which seem to be of a later date, and to have been composed probably in the time of the Maccabees.

In regard to the New Testament, a catalogue of the Gospels and of the Epistles of Paul was made in the beginning of the second century. Some of the Catholic epistles, which were doubted,—as the Epistle of James, the second of Peter, the second and third of John, and that of Jude,—were added afterwards, and their authority was established in the third and fourth centuries.

In regard to the form of the Canon, we have to notice:—

1. The Sections.
2. The Chapters.
3. The Verses.

1. The Old Testament was divided into larger and smaller *sections*. The former of these were of use in the public reading of the Word. The five books of Moses consisted of fifty-three or fifty-four of them. One (called *Paraschioth*) was read every Sabbath, and thus they extended over the whole year. They were marked by certain Hebrew letters, to shew where the different lessons began and ended. This division was made after the Babylonish captivity, when the Scriptures began to be read publicly in the synagogue. In the time of the Maccabees lessons from the Prophets were added. These were called *Haphtoroth*, probably because, when the reading of them was finished, the audience was dismissed. The word in the original denotes *dismissing—letting loose—opening;* not, however, as the Jews erroneously suppose, because Antiochus Epiphanes prohibited the reading of the Prophets, while he permitted that of the Law, but because, in the time of the Maccabees, greater attention was bestowed on the study of the Scriptures.

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The New Testament also was divided into *pericopæ* or sections greater and less. The former were called *ἐπίγραμματα*, the latter *λέμματα*. Both of these were subdivided into smaller parts.

2. The origin of the division of our Bibles into chapters is ascribed to Hugo de Sancto Caro, who, in the early part of the thirteenth century, first began to frame a concordance to the Latin Vulgate Version, and at length divided Scripture into the chapters as we now have them. In imitation of the Christians, the Jews, in the fifteenth century, did the same. Rabbi Mordecai Nathan framed a Hebrew concordance, which was afterwards completed by Buxtorf.

3. The division into verses is still more recent. The origin of this division in regard to the Old Testament is uncertain. Some say that it is very ancient and that it originated with the Chaldee Paraphrasts. But there is no foundation for this opinion. It is well known that the division of the New Testament into verses was made by Robert Stephens, who accomplished the work while on a journey from Lyons to Paris. It is not always correct, yet it has a certain degree of authority in consequence of its being now commonly adopted. A more correct division, however, is still desiderated.

We have now to speak of Scripture as containing a revelation from heaven. This position we shall

I. Explain, and

II. Prove.

I. The explanation embraces—

(*a*) The matter of revelation.

(*b*) The persons to whom it was made.

(*c*) The manner in which it was communicated.

(*a*) In regard to the matter or subject of revelation, we observe, that it is *historical, doctrinal,* and *practical.* It is not necessary to hold that the first of these was the subject of immediate revelation to the sacred writers. It is sufficient to say that the Holy Spirit exercised such a superintendence over them, that they narrated only what was true. Where ordinary means suffice, it is not usual for God to vouchsafe miraculous interposition and assistance. But matters of history did not require to be revealed. The Spirit of God only took care that nothing false should be committed to writing. Moses did not receive what is contained in Genesis by immediate revelation, but, as Vitringa* has observed, from the ancient monuments of the patriarchs,

* Observationes Sacræ, cap. iv.

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which came into his possession. *Doctrinal* truths were, in part, immediately revealed,—those, especially, which were above the reach of the human understanding,—and, in part, were ascertained by the writers themselves. Mysteries, for example, were the subjects of direct revelation; while, at the same time, as the writers were, for the most part, illiterate men, the Holy Spirit so guided them, that they thought and wrote only according to truth, even on those things which reason taught, and which, by legitimate consequence, might be deduced from what had been revealed. *Prophecies*, again, which far exceed the powers of the human mind, were the subject of immediate revelation alone.

Did this revelation extend to the words and phrases of Scripture? or did the sacred writers exercise in this matter their own judgment and use their own peculiar style? We are disposed to take a middle view on the subject. On extraordinary occasions, the words were dictated by the Spirit of God, as our Lord promised to his Apostles, Matt. x. 19. Yet these men employed each his own style; otherwise they would have been no more than inanimate, senseless machines. The style, however, may be regarded as having the Spirit for its author, inasmuch as he presided over those who employed it, and caused them to convey the message entrusted to them in language at once appropriate and elegant. They were not mere passive instruments in his hand—they employed the faculties which God had bestowed upon them. The Spirit accommodated himself to the peculiar manner of those whom he employed; and hence the diversity of style by which each is characterized. In this sense, the diversity may be ascribed to him. "All Scripture," says Paul, "is given by inspiration of God," 2 Tim. iii. 16. "Which things also we speak, not in the words which man's wisdom teacheth, but which the Holy Ghost teacheth," 1 Cor. ii. 13. "Holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost," 2 Pet. i. 21.

(*b.*) Those to whom Revelation was made were generally holy men—men living in the fear of God and aiming at the advancement of his glory. "The secret of the Lord," says David, "is with them that fear him," Ps. xxv. 14. Ordinarily God holds no intercourse except with persons of this description; yet, on extraordinary occasions, he does sometimes give revelations of his will to individuals of a widely opposite character. He did so, for instance, to Pharaoh and Nebuchadnezzar.

(*c.*) The manner in which revelation is made is either *internal* or *external*. The internal has reference to the imagination and is cal-

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led *inspiration*; or it has reference to the understanding and is called *illumination*. By the former men were made acquainted with what God was pleased to reveal to them, either when they were asleep or when they were awake. This distinction is noticed in the following passage, "Hear now these words; if there be a prophet among you, I, the Lord, will make myself known to him in a *vision*, and will speak to him in a *dream*," Numbers xii. 6.

A dream is the imagination at work while the individual is asleep, in which he thinks he hears and sees something which yet he neither hears nor sees. Dreams are of two kinds, *natural* and *supernatural*. In the former the mind merely brings together what it already knows of God, but without order and without coherence; whereas, in the latter, the mind is more powerfully impressed either by the direct agency of God himself or by the instrumentality of angelic beings. These supernatural dreams are either *simple*, in which the individual merely perceives certain objects in his sleep, as in the case of Joseph, who saw the moon and the stars doing obeisance to him; or they are *compound*, in which, besides the object, there is seen a person with whom the dreamer enters into conversation, as in the case of Jacob, who, at Peniel, not only saw the mystic ladder and the angels descending and ascending upon it, but heard God himself addressing him from heaven.

But revelation was sometimes made by visions to persons while they were awake, by which they were, for a time, withdrawn, as it were, from the use of their external senses and of their peculiar properties, and rivetted to the contemplation of those objects which were presented to their minds. The imagination in this case received a stronger impression. The mental powers were for a season diverted from their ordinary exercise, and by a supernatural impulse were directed solely to the consideration of those objects which by that impulse were brought before them. Visions of this kind were vouchsafed to Isaiah under the Old Testament and to John under the New. They were often accompanied by such overpowering feelings of fear, that divine aid was required to support those to whom God in this way revealed his will, (Dan. x. 8–10) and by actions which led unbelieving men to suppose that they were insane.

The other mode of internal revelation has reference to the understanding and is called *illumination*. In this case, while the sacred writers employed their own faculties and exercised their own judgment, the Spirit of God assisted and directed them, gave them a clear and

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distinct view of the truth which they were to communicate, and enabled them correctly and appropriately to express it. Under this influence the sacred penmen wrote, especially the dogmatical, both practical and theoretical, and the historical, the latter of whom, however, required less of the illumination of the Spirit.

External revelation consisted of communications made by a living voice, whether that voice was distinct yet faint, (as was the case, in all probability, with the *Urim* and *Thummim*) whether it resembled the human voice, as in the case of Samuel, 1 Sam. iii. 4, or whether it sounded like the thunder, John xii. 29.

These are the principal ways in which revelation was made to men. Distinct from them, however, there was the peculiar method which God adopted with Moses, who, in this respect, far exceeded the other prophets, inasmuch as Jehovah spake with him "mouth to mouth, even apparently, and not in dark speeches," Numb. xii. 8. And certainly no higher honour can be conceived than that which was bestowed upon him. It was his singular privilege to be permitted, at pleasure, to consult God. While others must wait the time and manner in which he saw meet to honour them with access to himself, —while other prophets were wrapt in ecstasy, or affected with a more powerful impulse, Moses conversed with God, and God with him, as friend with friend,—not in tones fitted to overpower and confound, but with a human voice, or a voice like that of man.

II. We now proceed to prove that the books of Scripture contain a revelation from God. The proof which we adduce is not *mathematical*, but *moral*, which is such that, though it be sufficient to demonstrate the truth, when no opposition or prejudice exists against the truth, it does not at the same time force conviction upon a man, or compel him to receive the truth, but leaves him at liberty to give his assent to it or not. This kind of proof is sufficient for producing conviction. It does not infringe upon man's liberty, for it does not extort assent; it does not compel him to the pursuit of virtue against his will; and, if not admitted in establishing the divinity of Scripture, leaves us without any indication of a mind well affected towards the truth. The *mathematical* proof allows man no liberty of assent or of denial; it compels assent, which the moral does not. When the objection, therefore, is urged, that the divinity of Scripture is incapable of proof, mathematical proof is meant. But still we have moral evidence, which, though it does not compel assent, is sufficient to produce conviction. With these remarks, we now proceed to the consideration of this evidence, not in regard to the books of Scripture sepa-

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rately, but in regard to the Canon as a whole. The arguments which we shall employ are of a general kind, and are drawn

(1.) From history.

(2.) From the contents of Scripture.

(3.) From miracles.

(4.) From the effects which Scripture has produced.

(1,) The historical argument includes

(*a.*) The testimony of the sacred writers themselves, and

(*b.*) The proof derived from the truth of part of the history in favour of the truth of the whole.

(*a.*) The sacred writers declare that a revelation was made to them, and that they delivered a message from God. Moses and the other prophets ordinarily used the expression, "Thus saith the Lord." The Apostles declared that they spoke by the Spirit. The Thessalonians are commended, because they received Paul's message not as the word of man, but as that of God, 1 Thess. ii. 13. Scripture is said to be "given by inspiration of God," 2 Tim. iii. 16. The prophets "spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost," 2 Pet. i. 21.

But it may be said that we beg the question when we prove the divinity of Scripture by the testimony of the writers themselves; for a testimony given by a person in his own cause cannot be regarded as satisfactory and valid. But we reply, that the testimony is to be considered not simply in itself, but in relation to those who give it, inasmuch as they wished to declare what was true. A testimony borne by a witness in his own cause has no weight, unless it appear that he had opportunities of knowing the truth, that he wished to bear witness to the truth, and that he had no intention of deceiving others. Testimony which would have no weight in one's own cause is that which is given by a witness who is not considered true or who may at least be suspected of falsehood. But, as the sacred writers declare that they spake the word of God, that they received a revelation from him, and that they were moved by him, the case is different. If they had the means of knowing whether the message they delivered was from God, and if they wished to declare what was true and not to deceive others, then their own testimony may be admitted as proof.

Let us see, then, whether, in saying that they spoke the word of God, they were not themselves deceived,—whether they could be certain that what was revealed to them was really divine and not rather the suggestion of their own imagination. There are certain criteria by which visions may be distinguished from illusions, and

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the voice of God from the voice of man, and from which it is evident that the sacred writers knew that a divine revelation was communicated to them.

1. The testimony is given by illiterate and unpolished men, who declare that they were firmly persuaded of the truth of what they said. Thus Micaiah says to the messenger of Ahab, "As the Lord liveth, what the Lord saith unto me, that will I speak," 1 Kings xxii. 14. In the same strain Jeremiah spoke, "I will not make mention of him, nor speak any more in his name; but *his word* was in mine heart, as a burning fire shut up in my bones; and I was weary with forbearing, and I could not *stay*," Jer. xx. 9.

2. When God reveals himself to a person, he gives the most unquestionable proofs of his presence. His word is armed with omnipotence; it triumphs over the mind and over its indisposition to believe, and removes all doubt as to its being really from him. We have instances of this in those who, though not among the number of his people, were convinced, nevertheless, that the revelation made to them was from God,—Pharaoh, Gen. xli.; Balaam, Numb. xxii.; Nebuchadnezzar, Dan. ii.

3. The matter and design of revelation form another criterion. If, in substance, it be such as cannot proceed from human imagination merely or from an evil spirit, and if its tendency be to advance the glory of God and the welfare of our neighbour, we have a proof that it is divine. For whatever proceeds from God must be worthy of him and agreeable to his perfections. But the things revealed in Scripture are altogether beyond the reach of human invention; they are all worthy of God and tend to manifest his glory.

4. Again, when an individual was frequently favoured with revelations, he could easily distinguish between such as were true and such as were false or were the product of his own imagination. At first he may have been doubtful on this point; but his doubt afterwards gave way to certainty. We have the case of Samuel when yet a child, who thought that the voice of God, when he first heard it, was that of Eli, but who was at length convinced that it was God who addressed him, 1 Sam. iii. The sacred writers could in like manner ascertain, if they wished, whether God really spoke to them.

But it is asked whether, even admitting this to be the case, they intended to speak the truth, or wished rather to deceive others. We reply, that the intention to deceive is completely at variance with the character of men who, as their writings and whole history shew, lived in the fear of God and in the cultivation of love towards their fellow men.

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Besides, there were in those days tests by which true prophets could be distinguished from those who were false. For example, if their predictions were fulfilled, they were to be regarded as sent of God, Deut. xviii. 22; Jer. xxviii. 9. If they could work signs and wonders, and if they were characterized by the holiness of their lives, they proved that they had a divine commission in reproving sin, in inculcating virtue, and in the fearless, faithful, and constant annunciation of the divine will in the midst of all the troubles to which they were exposed. And they could not impose upon those who were in circumstances to detect with ease any falsehood, had it been attempted to be palmed upon them. For they bore witness to events which took place among those whom they addressed,—such as the descent of the Holy Spirit and the gift of tongues, which certainly could be no invention of their own, and which prove that they were not false but true prophets.

(*b.*) The second part of the historical argument is to this effect. If part of the history be true, then the whole is true. We are not now speaking of the divinity of the history, but of the divinity of Scripture. The proof founded on the truth of the historical facts, that the books of Scripture contain a true revelation, is distinct from that to which we now refer. In order to make this argument plain, we appeal to two remarkable facts.

First, God really appeared to the Israelites on Mount Sinai and thence promulgated his law. *Secondly*, Christ rose from the dead. If the former of these be true, it follows that Moses was a true prophet—that the law was given by God—and that the whole of the legal economy was of divine institution. If the latter be true, it follows not only that Christ was the Messiah, but also that Moses was divinely commissioned, because he bore testimony to Christ. One of these facts, therefore, would be sufficient in the way of proof. For if that fact be historically true, then unquestionably the whole of Scripture is also true.

But as the truth of the history depends solely on the testimony of credible witnesses, we must examine their ability and intention to declare what was true; for they are worthy of credit only when they possess these two qualifications—

I. The power of ascertaining the truth, and

II. The intention of speaking it.

I. If it be asked, then, whether those who bear witness to the resurrection of Christ were not deceived, but were certain of the truth of the fact which they declared, we say, we have the strongest evi-

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dence that they had the means of knowing whether Christ rose from the dead or not.

1. They were eye and ear witnesses. Their testimony refers not to what happened at different periods and in unknown places, but to one and the same thing,—not to what they had heard by report only, but to what they themselves had seen.

2. They did not bear witness of a matter that was obscure, removed from observation and imaginary merely, but of a fact which presented itself to their senses, and in regard to which they could not be deceived.

3. They were not unsuspecting, but the contrary. Credulity often makes men imagine that they see what they really do not see; but they did not allow themselves to be convinced of the resurrection of Christ, except by palpable signs. As the history shews, they yielded not an easy but a hesitating assent; and, as they were thus exempt from the charge of being easy or rash of belief, it is evident that they declared what was true.

4. Christ, moreover, shewed himself after his resurrection not to one or two individuals only but to several;—first to the eleven Apostles, and then to more than five hundred brethren, 1 Cor. xv. 5, 6. In a matter of this kind it is impossible that such a number could be deceived.

II. But then, did these witnesses intend to speak the truth? If they did, their testimony will be free from all contradiction. And that such was their intention is evident,

1. From a consideration of their moral character. As, on the one hand, they were unpolished, unlearned men, who could entertain no design to impose upon others; so, on the other, they lived in the fear of God—spoke as in his immediate presence—solemnly called him to witness—denounced his judgments—and shewed their abhorrence of all falsehood. In a matter of such importance it is not to be supposed that such men would declare what they knew was not true. They must have been men of the most abandoned and profligate character, if they did what it is impossible to meditate doing without being guilty of sin.

2. Because they had no conceivable motive for declaring what was false. If they had not known that Christ had risen, what could prompt them to affirm that he had?—what purpose could they serve by cherishing such an idea?—what could they expect by labouring to make others believe it? No benefit, assuredly, no reputation, but, on the contrary, disadvantage of every kind, and persecution itself.

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3. Because, if they had been impostors, they would not all have persevered in their testimony--one or other of them would have drawn back. Yet they all continued steadfast, and that, too, in the midst of torments of every description. An instance has never occurred, in the history of the world, of so many individuals persisting, in circumstances such as those in which the Apostles were placed, in maintaining a fact to be true which they knew to be false.

4. Because their testimony was received as true by those among whom they lived. If God, for instance, had not really appeared on Mount Sinai, would the people have believed it?—would they have submitted to a yoke so severe as that which was laid upon them? It cannot be said that the Jews consented in this case to an imposture; for how could they consent to that which so clearly describes their own sins? And if the Apostles designed to deceive, how did they so readily obtain credit among men? They would not have been so readily believed if it had been their purpose to palm an imposture on the world. The recentness of the events to which they bore witness would easily have led to their detection.

5. Because they bore witness to facts, to which others testified, and which were received by others without any contradiction. Their testimony, therefore, regarding the resurrection of Christ is true.

(2.) Our second argument in favour of Scripture's containing a revelation from God is drawn from the contents of Scripture itself. These may be viewed as *prophetical* and *doctrinal.*

A prophecy, and we take it for granted that there are prophecies in Scripture, is not a prediction of future events which depend on natural causes, such as the alternation of day and night, the vicissitude of the seasons, the tides of the ocean, the movements of the heavenly bodies, eclipses, &c.; but it is a prediction of future contingent events, —of events which have no necessary cause, such as the actions of men and the consequences that result from them. Such predictions every one must have met with in Scripture. Whether they relate to the Church or to its members, to Christ the Head of the Church or to the world and its various conditions, we derive from them an argument for the divinity of Scripture. And the argument is founded on this, that such predictions, which can proceed only from God, bear witness to the divine authority of his Word, that the persons who deliver them must have been enlightened by him, and that, as these predictions are in perfect harmony with the doctrine taught, the doctrine also must be true, and those who taught it must have been commissioned and inspired by God. For he could not, in consistency with his own

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perfections, have employed these men as his instruments, if they had not declared what was true. A prediction, therefore, is an infallible sign of a true prophet, of his being a messenger from God, and a teacher of truth, provided it appear that his prophecy can be only from God. And this can be easily shewn. For,—

1. A prophecy requires the foreknowledge of future contingent events. This foreknowledge is the prerogative of God alone. Such events cannot happen of themselves or be the cause of their own existence,—the cause is contingent as well as the effects. They can be known to be future, therefore, only by him who has power over all, by whom all things are ordained, and who by his mighty arm governs all.

2. Scripture confirms this. See Isa. xliii. 12; xliv. 7, 8; xlvi. 10. In these passages God appeals to his foreknowledge as a proof of his divinity, and challenges the gods of the heathen to declare things to come.

It is objected that prophecies are obscure and have no fixed meaning or interpretation, and that arguments, therefore, cannot be drawn from them in favour of the divine origin of Scripture. To this we reply, that, though some of them be obscure, their obscurity arises not so much from any defect in them, as from a want of sufficient attention on our part in examining them—from our ignorance of the circumstances connected with them—from our misunderstanding sometimes the expressions employed—from our defective knowledge of history—or from our being under the influence of prejudice. But we deny the obscurity of all or even of the greater number of the prophecies. They are, on the contrary, most clear and distinct,—those, for instance, by Isaiah, Jeremiah, and Daniel, which relate to the calling of the Gentiles—to the Messiah and the office which he was to discharge—to the Babylonish captivity and the deliverance from it—to the destiny of the Jewish people under the Maccabees—to the condition of the world—and to the vicissitudes of kingdoms. Nay, God sometimes mentions the names of the individuals by whom the prediction is to be accomplished,—Josiah, for example, 1 Kings xiii. 2, and Cyrus, Isa. xliv. 28,—the former of whom was to destroy the idolatrous altar erected by Jeroboam, and the latter, to effect the deliverance of the Jews from their captivity in Babylon.

This objection having no weight, the opponents of revelation run to the opposite extreme, and say that those prophecies which cannot be charged with obscurity were uttered too near to the events to

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which they refer, and that they are to be regarded only as a narrative of historical facts. On this ground *Porphyry* objected to the prophecy of Daniel. We say, in reply, that this objection has no foundation to rest upon, and rather betokens the desperate nature of the cause in vindication of which it is urged. For the book of Daniel contains predictions regarding the Messiah and his kingdom, and regarding the deliverance of the Jews from the Babylonish captivity. This book was known long before the events to which it alludes took place,—it was in existence in the time of the Maccabees, when mention was made of it. It is certain that it was extant before the coming of Christ. In his prediction concerning the destruction of Jerusalem (Matth. xxiv. 15), our Lord appeals to the book of Daniel, (Dan. ix. 27.) Besides, if we examine the writing of this prophet, and attend to the harmony of the emblems, and to the adaptation of all the several parts to the thing pointed at, we can entertain no doubt of the truth of his prediction. No man could devise anything so well arranged or containing such a multitude of appropriate and expressive emblems.

But it is further objected that the heathen also had their predictions, and that, therefore, all predictions are involved in obscurity. We answer, (*a*,) The predictions of the heathen had no connection at all with the doctrine taught, and, therefore, were not made for the purpose of establishing it. We have an instance of this in Balaam's prophecy. (*b*,) Most, if not all, of the ancient oracles were, according to Cicero, the inventions of the priests. (*c*,) Their predictions had no reference to future contingent events, but only to those which, from the nature of things or from the influence of political causes, might be easily foreseen and foretold; and, therefore, when they declared what turned out to be true, the event was merely the result of conjecture. (*d*,) Their predictions were couched in very ambiguous language and were capable of a double and very different interpretation. *Aio te Aeacida* (such was the response given by the oracle to Pyrrhus) *Romanos vincere posse.* The Romans proved victorious, and, though Pyrrhus understood the oracle as predicting his own success, the ambiguity of its language, which could be understood in either way, sustained its reputation. Similar to this was the answer given to Crœsus by the oracle at Delphi, in reference to the war which he was about to wage against the Persians. He was told *that he would destroy a great empire;* but the oracular response was given in such terms, that, in whatever way matters might terminate, its words would receive their fulfil-

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ment. The predictions contained in Scripture are free from the perplexing ambiguity which characterizes those of the heathen, and the argument, therefore, founded upon them, remains as strong as before.

The *doctrinal* part of Scripture, whether theoretical or practical, forms part of the second argument.

The former includes the truth revealed concerning God—concerning man as a sinner—the method of reconciliation and subjects of a similar kind. And it has all the marks of a divine original. For, (*a*,) It is not opposed but agreeable to sound reason. This must be the character of doctrine which claims to be divine; for both reason and revelation have God for their author and cannot contradict each other. (*b*,) It is useful and indispensably necessary. We cannot suppose that God would reveal anything which was not so. (*c*,) It contains truths which reason cannot discover—truths which, though they do not contradict this faculty, are yet far beyond its reach; and these truths must proceed from God. (*d*,) It is perfect, containing all that is necessary to be believed and practised, and in all its several parts preserving an unbroken harmony.

The whole of the practical part also shews its divine original. The sum of it is love to God manifesting itself in love to our neighbour. It is so pure, and rational, and sublime, that, without divine assistance, men never could have attained to it. It has characters still more remarkable,—characters which prove that its doctrines possess an excellence infinitely superior to every moral system, derived from reason alone, which the world has ever seen. For, (*a*,) Scripture requires not only honesty and probity in our outward conduct, but purity of heart and of purpose in all our actions. (*b*,) It requires not only justice, but kindness and love even to our bitterest enemies. It demands, moreover, not only that we be moderate in our desires, but that we exercise self-denial, and be ready, if God should call us, to part even with life itself. If we had nothing more than Christ's Sermon on the Mount, we would have ample proof that the doctrinal part of Scripture has God for its author.

(3.) Our third argument is drawn from *miracles*.

Miracles are real effects presenting themselves to the senses, and contrary to the laws of nature,—effects which cannot be produced by the combination of natural powers and of second causes, but which are altogether beyond their reach. Many such are recorded in Scripture.

It has been questioned whether miracles, considered in them-

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selves, can prove the truth of a doctrine and the divine mission of those who perform them; or whether the proof which they furnish is valid, only when the doctrine which they are designed to confirm is agreeable to the nature of God and to the relations in which he stands to us.

Some are of the latter opinion,—that miracles, namely, derive their force only from the fact that the doctrine taught is true. They say that miracles may be performed for the confirmation of falsehood, and that, for the purpose of trying men, God may permit false teachers to perform them.

Others, again, hold, that the proof of a doctrine's being divine, drawn from miracles alone, is clear and conclusive, without taking the doctrine into account at all. They say that none but God can work miracles.

We think that these opinions may be reconciled; and, for the purpose of shewing that they may, we shall consider,—

In the *first* place, whether miracles, considered in themselves, always accompany sound doctrine. This point may be easily settled. It is certain that miracles are invariably connected with doctrinal truth, and never can be performed by false teachers. Those, therefore, who differ from us must lose their cause. For (*a*,) Miracles can be performed only by God, (*b*,) God cannot affix his seal to a falsehood. The former of these statements is clear, (*a*) From Scripture, Exod. xv. 11, 12; Psal. lxxxvi. 8; lxxxix. 6; (*b*), From reason and from the definition of a miracle. As a miracle is contrary to the laws of nature, it cannot be performed by these laws. It is not according to the established order of things, nor according to the power of second causes or of the laws which regulate them, and cannot be performed by those who are themselves subject to that order and bound by these laws;—and such are all beings except God. He alone who established the laws of nature has power to depart from them or to alter them; and, therefore, miracles can be performed only by him. If false teachers, then, have wrought miracles, it must follow that God produced such effects in compliance with their wishes or in answer to their prayers, or that he condescended to produce them for the purpose of confirming their false doctrine. But we say that God cannot perform miracles for such a purpose. The false teacher is a liar in pretending to a divine mission; and, if God were to confirm that pretension by miracles, he would set his seal to an imposture. This, however, is utterly at variance with the justice and the truth of God. Scrip-

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ture declares that he tempts no man, James i. 13; and the justice of his nature renders it impossible that he should do so.

It is said that, in Scripture, false teachers are spoken of as performing signs and miracles. True; but it is expressly added, that they were not really miracles, but "lying wonders," *τέρατα ψεύδα*, 2 Thess. ii. 9. The magicians of Egypt, we are told, wrought miracles similar to those of Moses,—"they also did in like manner;" but observe what is added, "with their enchantments," בלטיהם, Exod. viii. 7. They were wonderful effects, doubtless, but not miracles, except in external appearance. Hence the magicians were compelled to acknowledge in reference to the miracles which Moses wrought, "this is the finger of God," Exod. viii. 19. They changed the rod into a serpent, because, in all probability, they had a serpent in their bosom, and, by sleight of hand, threw it upon the ground; whereas, when Aaron cast down his rod, it was really changed into that reptile. They changed the water into blood only in outward appearance, by infusing into it a substance that imparted to it the colour of blood. They could thus do what might without difficulty be done. They produced frogs by presenting the resemblance of these animals to those who were disposed to believe, or by bringing them from some other quarter; but, when the miracle of the lice was performed, and when other wonders were wrought which they could not counterfeit, it was evident that they were merely conjurors,—they were compelled to acknowledge the power of God. They did not, therefore, perform real miracles.*

We read in Deut. xiii. 1, &c., "If there arise among you a prophet, or a dreamer of dreams, and giveth thee a sign or a wonder, and the sign or the wonder come to pass, whereof he spake unto thee, saying, Let us go after other gods, which thou hast not known, and let us serve them, thou shalt not hearken unto the words of that prophet," &c. From this passage, it has been inferred that miracles may be wrought to confirm a falsehood. It does not warrant the inference, however, that such a prophet or false teacher

* There is no necessity for calling in question the *reality* of the three miracles which the magicians on this occasion performed. Had they been left to try their own arts and had these failed, in all probability they would have ascribed the miracles of Moses not to the intervention of the divine power, but to his own superior magical skill. Whereas, when they saw their doings followed by effects which they did not and could not anticipate, and at which, no doubt, they themselves wondered greatly, the conviction must have forced itself upon them that God was really working by them too. It was this conviction, we believe, which compelled them to make the admission which the mere failure of their own tricks would never have extorted from them. [TRANSL.]

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wrought real miracles, but only that he produced signs which bore some resemblance to them. God, therefore, here put the people on their guard not against real but against false miracles—warned them against being deceived by them—and urged them to attend to the divine law which was miraculously attested, and to bear in mind, that, if a false prophet were permitted to tempt them by signs, they were not to hearken to his words. Hence we conclude, that they were not real miracles, and that such miracles are always connected with sound doctrine and cannot be performed by false teachers.

Let us enquire, in the *second* place, whether miracles, considered in themselves, are to us a sufficient proof of the divinity of the doctrine in confirmation of which they are wrought. We do not always know, it is said, how to distinguish false miracles from true, and often mistake the former for the latter. Now the proof which they furnish is not sufficient unless their reality be established; they may be true in themselves, and yet their evidence in favour of the divine authority of the teacher and his message may be regarded as incomplete. But we will first endeavour to shew that, considered in themselves, their evidence is perfectly satisfactory, and forms a solid basis on which to rest our faith; and then we will give some marks by which true and false miracles may be distinguished.

1. Miracles are called signs,—an inappropriate name, if they are not designed and fitted to be signs of something. And what do they signify but this, that the person who performs them is sent by God and that his doctrine is divine? If they are not a proof of this, they cannot be called signs. But they are called and are really such.

2. Scripture declares that miracles are designed to persuade men of the way of salvation and to furnish a testimony to the truth of the doctrine taught. Thus God is said to have performed them for the purpose of corroborating the truth of the Gospel, Mark xvi. 20; Rom. xv. 18, 19; Heb. ii. 4; and hence also we find Christ directing the attention of unbelievers to his miracles, as affording testimony to the divinity of his mission and doctrine, John x. 25; xiv. 11; xv. 24.

3. God has taken care that miracles should be performed for the proof of what was called in question, and that, too, in circumstances in which nothing was seen but the miracles themselves. In such cases, however, he demanded faith in those to whom they were wrought—a demand which clearly shews that miracles alone may be regarded by us as sufficient evidence. If this be not admitted, then God in working them cannot be regarded as having af-

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forded them conclusive evidence, or as having a right to demand faith on the part of those who witnessed them. We have two memorable instances in proof of the contrary. The one occurred in the time of Pharaoh. Moses was sent by God to that monarch —demanded him to let the Israelites go free from the bondage and oppression to which he had subjected them—and gave no other evidence of his divine mission than miracles. Pharaoh persisted in unbelief and disobedience, and, in consequence, was visited with the severest plagues. The other happened in the days of Elijah, when a dispute arose as to who was the true God—Jehovah or Baal, 1 Kings xviii. 21, &c. Elijah appealed to the miracle of fire to be sent down from heaven. In this case, also, there was nothing but the miracle to prove the deity of Jehovah—the miracle alone decided the controversy.

4. We find that the people believed on the evidence of miracles alone, Exod. viii. 19 ; 1 Kings xviii. 39 ; Matt. ix. 8 ; John ix. 33 ; and that they are commended for having done so. Miracles, then, were designed for their conviction, and must be regarded, therefore, as sufficient in themselves, and as justifying the faith of those who believed on the evidence which they afforded.

5. In the miracles which God wrought he consulted the inexperience of the people, and gave them a proof which they would have no difficulty in understanding. Any other mode of proof would, in their circumstances, have scarcely been intelligible. They must believe, therefore, because of the miracles ; for otherwise these miracles would not have answered the design of God, who performed them for the purpose of giving them a foundation on which they might rest their faith.

We hold this view of the question, however, with some qualification. All miracles have not the same demonstrative evidence, because some are miracles only in appearance. We must distinguish, therefore, between those which are false and those which are true. But how is this to be done ? We have in Scripture a record of miracles which false teachers could not perform or even imitate in outward appearance, and which really deserve to be called mighty and wonderful. The proof which they afforded was so strong that they required only to be seen. Those who were blind from their birth receiving their sight—the dead raised to life—the stormy deep hushed into a calm—these, which were all performed by Christ, may be easily distinguished from false signs and pretended miracles.

There are miracles of another kind—those, namely, which evil

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spirits, by natural causes, and which men, by artifice, may work. These, however, when minutely examined, may be easily distinguished from real miracles, the truth of which may be ascertained by other criteria than those we have already given. The providence of God is one of these. His justice, goodness, and truth, forbid the supposition that, when his cause is in question, miracles should be performed by Satan or by any of his agents. Even though they could be wrought by them, they have no permission from him to do so. In the case of Elijah, for example, already mentioned, the prophet, for the purpose of making it evident that Jehovah was the true God, appealed to the sign which was to be asked from heaven. Satan, certainly, by his arts, might have done this; but he was not then permitted, because the divine honour was the subject of the controversy, and because this controversy was to be settled by miracle alone. Thus also the Egyptian magicians were defeated in the days of Moses.

There are other tests of great importance. (*a.*) The miracles of the true prophets were performed independently of second causes. They presented themselves to the senses—they were wrought with confidence—and were admitted by all who witnessed them. These things cannot be said of pretended miracles. (*b.*) In distinguishing between true and false miracles, we must take into consideration the doctrine attested by the former. If he who works miracles teach what is agreeable to the doctrine which has already been miraculously confirmed, his miracles may be regarded as real. But if he propound what is at variance with that which has been so confirmed, then the miracles which he performs to attest it must be viewed as false. God cannot miraculously establish doctrines which are in direct contradiction to each other. If an individual, therefore, oppose the doctrine to which God has set his seal, then, whatever pretensions he may advance to a divine mission by his signs and wonders, he cannot be looked upon as a messenger from God. Thus the Jews, who were assured of the divine mission of Moses by the miracles which he wrought in attestation of it, might have justly concluded that the miracles of those who tempted them to go after other gods were but false and lying wonders.

The last test of true miracles to which we shall allude is the character of those who perform them and the manner in which they are wrought. The authors of them must be holy men, for God "heareth not sinners," John ix. 31. The miracles themselves must be characterized by dignity, by the absence of all appearance of art, and by the spirit of confidence in which they are performed.

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In addition to miracles, there are other divine testimonies to the truth of Scripture. There is the style in which it is written, dignified yet simple, simple yet bold and sublime—energetic—consistent—and admirably fitted to arouse to reflection and carry conviction to the mind. There is the preservation of the books, through a long succession of ages and in the face of much opposition, uncorrupted and entire—and finally, there is the harmony that pervades them, though they were written by different persons and at different times.

(4.) Our fourth and last argument is drawn from the *effects with which Scripture has been attended.* These are of such a kind, that nothing less than the power of God could have produced them, and are so wonderful, whether they relate to individuals or to the world, that they clearly indicate their origin to be divine.

(*a*) Scripture is fitted to convict the sinner in the midst of his sins. Though he should remain still unconverted, it discloses to him the vileness of sin, and in many cases awakens in him feelings of shame.

(*b*) It is a means of conversion, begets hatred of sin, produces a longing for salvation and for communion with God, and incites to the diligent cultivation and practice of holiness. It pierces "even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart," Heb. iv. 12.

(*c*) It is fitted to promote our sanctification, by exciting us to virtue and enabling us to perform good works.

(*d*) It possesses a singular efficacy in imparting comfort—in upholding the mind in the midst of trouble—in shedding abroad the love of God in the heart—and in keeping alive the hope of a better life to come. All these effects are enumerated in Scripture itself with singular force and dignity, yet in a manner suited to the nature of man as a rational being. Psalm xix. 8, 9; Jer. xv. 16; 2 Tim. iii. 16.

How stupendous, too, are the effects which it has produced on the state of the world! It has overthrown the temples and altars of idolatry; it has assailed and undermined the kingdom of Satan, though defended by an armed host; and it has brought immortal souls into complete subjection to its authority and influence. It has established and disseminated true religion, which it could not have done unless the powerful hand of God had accompanied it. Its propagation has been effected in the most remarkable way, by the simple declaration of the truth by illiterate, inexperienced, unarmed, guileless men. It has had to contend against the most subtle artifices and the most formidable opposition. And yet, in a brief space

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of time, it has put down false opinions, and spread its own heavenly doctrines far and wide throughout the world.

These arguments might suffice; but there is still another, namely, that, if Scripture be not the Word of God, there has been and there is no revelation of his will. Reason, as we have already seen, suggests the strong probability of there being some revelation in the world; and we hold, that that of which we are in possession is the only one that can lay claim to this distinction. Let a comparison be instituted between it and the systems of the heathen and of Mohammed, and its certainty and superiority will be seen.

The heathen systems contain no important truth. They have no miracles, no oracles, to remove our doubts. The doctrinal part of their religion is not agreeable to reason; it not only has no power to pacify the conscience, but it is exceedingly defective and full of errors; while the practical part inculcates only the civil virtues, and does not teach that duties are to be performed with the view of attaining the highest end to which man can aspire. Their whole religious system, in a word, is irrational and superstitious.

As to the system of Mohammed, on what is it based?—it is the invention of a lewd, false, cruel, and warlike man. What proof did he afford of his mission? none;—neither miracles nor prophecy How was it propagated? by force of arms, and by tricks of imposture. What does it contain? little else, as we have shewn in our Ecclesiastical History,* than a detail of external ceremonies. We say again, therefore, either that there has been and is no revelation in the world, or that ours is the only one which God has given.

Another question presents itself,—Is revelation contained in these books alone? The Romish Church says that it is not, and has added some books to those which form our Canon,—we mean the Apocryphal writings which she regards as divine. She does not, indeed, admit the divine authority of the whole of them; but she places the following on a footing with Scripture:—the book of the Wisdom of Sirach, of Tobias, Judith, Susanna, Baruch and Ecclesiasticus, the additions to Esther and to Daniel, and first and second Maccabees.

We do not call these books Apocryphal in the sense attached to that word by the ancients, who understood it to apply to such as were forbidden to be read in public. Before the time of Jerome, the books of Scripture were distinguished into Canonical, Ecclesiastical, and Apocryphal. The Ecclesiastical were ranked among those

* Institutiones Historiæ Ecclesiæ, vol. v. Leovardiæ, 1781.

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which we call Apocryphal. So they were regarded by Ruffinus in the fourth century. They were, it was said, utterly useless, full of deadly errors, unworthy of being submitted to the eye of the public or of being read even in private, and, as the word itself denotes, deserving of being kept in concealment. Jerome, however, laying aside this distinction, classed the sacred books only into Canonical and Apocryphal. By the Apocryphal he understood the Ecclesiastical books in a lower sense—all, in short, which were not within the Canon—which were not kept in the chest in which the Canon was deposited, and which were not ranked among those books which were to be publicly read in the Church. These he called Apocryphal. After his time the meaning which he attached to the term prevailed, and in the same sense we now understand it.

Papists say that the Apocryphal books are Canonical and of divine authority. We hold that they are not. Although in the Council of Trent many wished to restore the ancient division into Canonical and Apocryphal, yet, by a majority of votes, the latter, including the Ecclesiastical, were declared to form part of the sacred Canon, and, by an imprudent decree which tended to the injury of the Church, were pronounced to be, equally with the other books of Scripture, the rule of faith. Protestants, however, deny their Canonicity.

1. Because they were never received as Canonical by the Jewish Church. They were not known by the Jews in the Hebrew tongue, in which they must at the time have been written, nor were they acknowledged as divine. How, then, could they be so at any future period, when certainly the Jewish Church could judge more correctly of these writings, seeing that the divine oracles had been entrusted to them? Christ distinguished the Sacred Writings into the *Law*, the *Prophets*, and the *Psalms*. These he regarded as Canonical. He never either spoke in approving terms of any others or charged the Jews with mutilating or abridging the Sacred Volume.

2. These books shew that there were no prophets at the time when they were written. The author of Maccabees declares that his work cost him considerable labour. It is true, indeed, that the author of the book of Wisdom pretends that it was written by Solomon; but it will be found, on comparing it with the other writings of Solomon, that there is a marked and striking difference between them. It is certain, moreover, that this book was written in Greek, and that the author makes allusion to games long posterior to the days of Solomon,—thus proving himself to be guilty of falsehood.

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3. The contents of these books disprove their Canonicity. Whether we consider the incidents recorded or the style in which they are narrated, they have no appearance of a divine original. This is evident to all who read them and compare them with the Canonical writings,—not to mention the errors which they contain, in regard to well-known matters of history. In the books of Judith and Susanna, for instance, it is said, that, during the Babylonish captivity, the Jews had the power of the sword, while we find an outrageously fabulous story recorded in the addition to the book of Esther.

Papists adduce the testimony of the Christian Church, which, they say, more than once approved of these books as Canonical. We reply, this testimony is partly false and partly does not serve its purpose. For the first four centuries, they were reckoned only as Ecclesiastical writings, and were, at length, afterwards considered as Canonical. Even the ancients themselves were deceived by their ignorance of the Hebrew language, and mistook them for Canonical writings. On this subject, however, we refer to our Ecclesiastical History,* in which we have given it fuller consideration.

But, leaving this discussion, let us proceed to shew what we mean, when we say, that Scripture is a source of theology—in what relation it stands to reason—and in what sense it may be regarded as an ultimate source.

1. That it is to be viewed as a source of theology is evident from the design for which it was given,—that men, namely, might be instructed in those things that pertain to salvation, and that the defects of reason might be supplied. Such, in its own language, is the purpose which God had in view, 2 Tim. iii. 16. But is the whole of Scripture, or only the New Testament, to be regarded in this light? Some professing Christians—Romanists and Mennonites†—exclude the Old Testament and maintain that it has now no authority and no use. Its authority is denied, on the ground that it contains some things which are abolished under the New Testament dispensation, and that it does not contain some things connected with the Old Testament dispensation which are still binding upon us, and which are to be perpetually observed, and that there is, therefore, an essential difference between the Old and the New. For this distinction, however, there is no ground whatever. The covenant of grace is revealed in

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* Institutiones Historiæ Ecclesiæ, vol. iii. Leovardiæ, 1781.

† For an account of the Mennonites see Mosheim's Ecclesiastical History, vol. ii. page 123, &c. Blackie and Co., Glasgow. 1827.

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Some professing Christians—Romanists and Mennonites*—exclude the Old Testament and maintain that it has now no authority and no use. Its authority is denied, on the ground that it contains some things which are abolished under the New Testament dispensation, and that it does not contain some things connected with the Old Testament dispensation which are still binding upon us, and which are to be perpetually observed, and that there is, therefore, an essential difference between the Old and the New. For this distinction, however, there is no ground whatever. The covenant of grace is revealed in the former as well as in the latter, although it may be with much less clearness. The former discloses the way of life in its essence as well as the latter. Although some matters connected with the law are not binding upon us now, yet the greater part of them, as we shall immediately see, has been of use in every age of the Church.

It may be sufficient here to shew, that the divine authority of the Old Testament is acknowledged in the New, Luke xvi. 29; John v. 39; Rom. xv. 4; 2 Tim. iii. 16. The New Testament Church is represented as "built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets," Eph. ii. 20; and the prophets are said to have ministered "not unto themselves but unto us," 1 Pet. i. 12.

But some may say, that "all the prophets and the law prophesied until John," Matt. xi. 13. In this passage, however, reference is made only to those things which were prefigured and predicted in types and shadows, and which began to receive their fulfilment in the time of John. Not as if nothing were to be found in the Old Testament which is not still binding upon us; for it contains things which bear upon all times alike. The law and the prophets ceased only in regard to those things by which events connected with New Testament times were prefigured. We must understand the words, therefore, in respect not of *abolition* but of *fulfilment*. Christ came not to destroy the law and the prophets, but to fulfil them, Matt. v. 17. He is the "end of the law," inasmuch as the shadows and prophecies pointed forward to him as the person in whom they should receive their fulfilment, Rom. x. 4. With the exception, therefore, of some things which related to the ceremonial law, and which have now not a literal but mystical meaning, the Old Testament may be regarded as a source of theology even in New Testament times.

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* For an account of the Mennonites see Mosheim's Ecclesiastical History, vol. ii. page 123, &c. Blackie and Co., Glasgow. 1827.

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In reply to the question, whether the Scriptures of the Old Testament are necessary to us under the New, we say that they are not absolutely so. In the New Testament alone we have sufficient information concerning the way of salvation. Still they are very useful. As a man who has two eyes is in a better condition for perceiving and judging of external objects than he who has but one; so the Old and New Testaments enable us to attain a clearer understanding of divine truth than if we had the help only of the latter. But we go farther and say that, in many respects, the Old Testament is *necessary*. It throws much light on the dealings of God and enables us to understand the New Testament aright, inasmuch as it contains many things which explain and amplify what is revealed there. Hence we find the apostles so frequently recommending the reading of the Old Testament, and hence also Timothy is commended because, from a child, he had known the holy Scriptures, 2 Tim. iii. 15. The prophecies it contains tend to strengthen our faith and to illustrate the economy of grace. A careful examination of the books of which it is composed is calculated, as experience proves, to be of the most essential service in investigating and elucidating divine truth, and justifies us in coming to the conclusion that they cannot be dispensed with.

2. Let us now consider in what relation Scripture stands to reason—what service reason renders in unfolding the meaning of Scripture—and how the two harmonize. These points are most important, yet, at the same time, are not without their difficulties. We must, in the first place, refute the erroneous opinions which have been entertained in regard to them, and then explain what seems to us to be the right view.

Men have erred both on the side of *excess*, in attributing too much to reason, and on the side of *defect*, in attributing to it too little.

Socinians have erred on the side of excess in holding that reason as a source of theology stands precisely on the same footing with revelation. They say that the word of God must be brought to the bar of that faculty, and not be received as a source of theology unless it contain the very truths which it teaches, and that nothing is to be believed which is not within its reach, which it cannot discover and comprehend. By reason they understand not only the original notions we have of what is true and false, but also our reasonings, to which they ascribe as great an authority, as if they were of themselves sufficient to discover and judge of all truth. But they maintain that Scripture contains nothing which is beyond the com-

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pass of reason—an opinion all the more surprising, when we bear in mind what they say concerning the existence of God,—namely, that it cannot be proved from reason. Although Scripture can teach nothing which destroys our original notions or involves a contradiction, it may yet teach what is above reason, nay what is contrary to our reasonings. Our grounds for rejecting the opinion just stated are these:—

(*a.*) God can reveal what is above the reach of reason; for our ideas are very imperfect and do not embrace all truth. If God can reveal only things about which reason can entertain no doubt, and which reason of itself can discover, then we must hold Scripture to be less necessary. But Scripture does reveal mysteries,—truths hidden from all men and altogether beyond the power of reason to discover. (*b.*) Man is now in a fallen condition, and cannot in all matters use his reason aright, but, as we have already shewn, is prone to fall into error. (*c.*) Scripture declares that our reasonings must be brought in subjection to its statements, 1 Cor. i. 19; 2 Cor. x. 5. (*d.*) The opinion is fraught with very injurious consequences,—consequences which stand in the way of rightly understanding Scripture; for, according to it, all mysteries must be rejected or erroneously interpreted.

Others, again, err in ascribing too little to reason—those, namely, who say that Scripture should contain what is not only *above* but *contrary* to reason—not to reasonings merely but to the first principles of reason—that reason is not to be listened to in interpreting the word of God or in judging of the doctrines revealed in it—that the meaning of the word is not to be rejected, although it be directly opposed to reason—that it matters not whether its statements be agreeable to reason or not—and that the language of Scripture is alone to be attended to. We reject this opinion, because, (1.) It is directly opposed to what the apostle says, 2 Cor. iv. 2. The manifestation of the Gospel to the conscience, of which he speaks, would be impossible, if it contained aught that was contrary to reason. (2.) Reason, as well as revelation, has God for its author, for it is a light kindled by him in man. The two, therefore, cannot oppose each other. God cannot contradict himself and teach by revelation what is contrary to reason. By the former, indeed, he may make known what is not discoverable by the latter, but not what is directly subversive of it; for he would thus, by two different sources, teach things diametrically opposite. (3.) God has so constituted us, that we cannot assume sources which are contradictory, and can never be

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convinced of a thing, though revealed, which runs counter to the dictates of reason; so that we may reject every interpretation of Scripture which is plainly at variance with its first principles. (4.) The consequences of this opinion are very absurd. It opens a wide door to erroneous interpretations of the word of God and to the introduction of every false doctrine. It was thus that the Papists introduced their doctrine of transubstantiation. We must also, according to this opinion, believe all that is ascribed to God after the manner of men. (5.) Scripture, moreover, is proved by reason to be divine. We can, in the exercise of this faculty, distinguish between true and false revelation. But, if every thing contained in Scripture be contrary to reason, then we can come to no conclusion in regard to its meaning or the divinity of its origin. Reason, therefore, has a province of its own in determining this matter, and in attaining a right understanding of the word of God.

But the same error is chargeable upon all, who, like the Methodists* in the seventeenth century, deny that the inferences legitimately and directly drawn from Scripture are to be regarded as Scriptural doctrines. The first who broached this error was Renaud of Angers, in a book entitled *Panoplia*. It was espoused by the Papists, who supposed that it would serve to uphold the interests of their own church, and by one blow put an end to all controversy with the Protestants. They demanded the Protestants, who charged them with entertaining very serious errors, to prove that the doctrines which they held were false. The Protestants maintained that the doctrines of the Papists were new and contrary to the word of God. The Papists, however, replied, that they had had these doctrines long in their possession; and when the Protestants attempted to shew their contrariety to Scripture by inferences drawn from Scripture, No, they rejoined, you must prove what you say, not by the inferences which you draw from the word, but from the *ipsissima verba* of the word; you must prove, for instance, that it is said in so many words that the Pope is not the Vicar of Christ—that there is no such place as purgatory—that there is no such thing as the authority of Councils. Hence arose the rejection of inferences drawn from Scripture and the controversy regarding them; and the question therefore is, whether they are to be considered in the light of sound Scriptural doctrine.

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* See Mosheim's Ecclesiastical History, vol. ii. page 178.

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But, for the better understanding of this subject, let us settle precisely what the state of the controversy is.

The question is not so much about *positive* doctrines as they are called, as about *negative*—not so much whether articles of faith are to be inferentially drawn from Scripture, as whether errors are by such a process to be refuted. For the opinion held by the Papists tends to prevent Protestants from using the word of God in this way in exposing the false tenets of the Romish Church.

In regard to *positive* doctrines, the question is not so much whether fundamental articles are to be tried by their consequences (this we do not affirm), as whether those articles which are not fundamental may not be brought to such a test. This seems to us to be the real question. The question, moreover, is not concerning inferences drawn from Scripture by a tedious process of reasoning and in regard to which we are easily deceived, but concerning those which may naturally and without any such laborious process be drawn from Scripture. Now we hold that inferences thus drawn from the word of God may be and ought to be employed in controversies regarding religion, and should be considered in the light of sound Scriptural doctrines. To maintain that they should not is at once dishonouring to God who speaks to us in his word—to us who are in possession of the word—and to the word itself. If we consider that God, who addresses us in his word, knows the full meaning of the words and phrases which he employs, and wishes that all that can be fairly deduced from them should be viewed as their true meaning, then we can come to no other conclusion than that he designed such inferences to be received as truth. In regard to ourselves, again, we are not stocks or stones, but beings endued with reason. When God addresses us, he wishes us, in examining his word, to exercise the faculty of reasoning which he has given us. And then, in regard to Scripture itself, it requires that we deal with it as reasonable beings, investigate the truths which it contains, and make a proper application of them. Falsehood cannot spring from truth; and, as Scripture is the word of God, inferences legitimately drawn from it must also be true. We are commanded to "search the Scriptures," John v. 39; to "compare spiritual things with spiritual," 1 Cor. ii. 13; and to "prophesy according to the proportion of faith," Rom. xii. 6. The examples of Christ and of his apostles, moreover, declare the same thing. Although they were infallible, they nevertheless reasoned from Scripture. Christ thus reasoned concerning the resurrection, "God is not the God of the dead but of the living," Matt. xxii. 32. Thus, also,

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the apostles proved that Jesus was the Messiah, Gal. iii. 16; Eph. iv. 9, 10. Paul, in like manner, reasoned regarding the existence of God from the works of nature, Acts xiv. 15–17; xvii. 24–28. We conclude, therefore, that we also ought to reason from Scripture, and to regard as sound doctrine whatever is legitimately deduced from it.

Among those who err in ascribing too little to reason, we may perhaps rank some of the Reformers, who looked upon it in the light of an instrument merely in the interpretation of Scripture, but who did not regard it as a source of Theology, although we believe that they thought more correctly than they spoke, and that, although they employed a term so unfitting, they did not wish it to be understood in its literal signification. For if we call reason an instrument, and consider it as such in the ordinary meaning of the word, then no opinion, or interpretation rather, of Scripture ought to be rejected, even although it be directly opposed to our original notions of reason and to conscience. But this the Reformers themselves do not admit. It is in a certain sense an instrument, inasmuch as it receives from Scripture truths which exceed our capacity; but it is more than an instrument, inasmuch as it judges for itself concerning the meaning of Scripture, and serves as a rule in interpreting Scripture in those things, namely, which either are not beyond its reach or which are not opposed to its dictates. A mere instrument forms no opinion of its own, but only inquires into the meaning of a book and into the laws of interpretation. Thus reason is nothing more than an instrument in interpreting, for instance, the writings of Cicero, because its only enquiry is as to what the writer says; it acts in this case merely as a machine. But when it has to do with the meaning of Scripture, it is presupposed that Scripture contains nothing false; and in this case reason judges whether the meaning attached to Scripture be true or false, because there can be nothing in it opposed to truth or contradictory to reason itself. The Reformers themselves confirm this by their own example. They rejected the doctrines of the Papists on the very ground of their being opposed to Scripture, and argued against them from reason. Scripture, besides, declares that it commends itself to the conscience. But it could not do so if it were directly contrary to the principle of reason. And, therefore, every interpretation which is thus contrary we are fully justified in rejecting. Reason then is not a mere instrument; it is also a source of theology.

In explaining what seems to us to be the right view of the relation in which revelation stands to reason, the following things must be observed:—

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(*a.*) That the revelation contained in Scripture can commend itself to us by reason alone, so that our faith, by which we receive it as true, cannot originate or exist except by reason and in the exercise of of that faculty. For it is by reason that we receive and judge of the arguments for the divinity of Scripture—distinguish between what is worthy and unworthy—and believe that prophecies can proceed only from God. So far, therefore, is reason from being of little service in regard to revelation that the latter should derive its evidence from the former. Our faith in this matter should be based upon reason, otherwise it would not be rational, it would not be the result of full persuasion, nor could we assign a reason why we believe.

(*b.*) Reason and revelation in those things which are not beyond the reach of the former are co-ordinate sources which keep pace with each other, inasmuch as in matters such as those just mentioned truths may be derived from both. They both teach the same thing —they both explain, illustrate, and confirm each other. Reason, for instance, has to do with revelation when it shows that, in many passages, expressions are to be understood not literally and in their proper signification, but figuratively and according to the principles of rhetoric; that when human parts, for example, ears, hands, &c., are attributed to God, Scripture thus accommodates itself to our own modes of speaking.

(*c.*) The principal place, however, is to be assigned to Scripture itself, because even in matters of this kind it powerfully assists and confirms reason, and directs it to the right course, inasmuch as it affords it the opportunity of eliciting many truths to which (in consequence of our inability to use it aright) it could not perhaps have attained unless thus aided by Scripture.

(*d.*) Scripture delivers reason from the abuse to which, on account of corruption and sin, it is so readily exposed.

(*e.*) Revelation imparts more weight to the dictates of reason in investigating truth than they would have of themselves. For an individual who is conscious of his depravity and weakness can scarcely put confidence in reason. Here, therefore, revelation comes to his aid, by its authority confirms reason, and makes him certain of those things in regard to which, in consequence of a consciousness of his depravity, he cannot safely trust to reason.

(*f.*) Revelation throws light upon reason in regard to the manner and circumstances of things. The former explains what the latter does not know. For example, reason teaches us that God created the world, but revelation unfolds to us the manner, the time, and the

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circumstances of the creation. It renders essential service, too, in regard to the providence of God and the principles on which it is conducted, in regard to the fall of man and the misery which it has entailed upon us. In this way the two principles are co-ordinate—each may be regarded in matters of this kind as a source from which truth may be derived.

It is to be observed, that on other points—truths, namely, to which reason of itself cannot attain and which revelation alone teaches—they are not co-ordinate sources, but the former is subordinate to the latter. (*a.*) Because reason derives these truths as the mysteries of religion from revelation—how, for instance, fallen man may be reconciled to God. (*b.*) Because reason does not decide that those truths which are above its reach and which it cannot of itself discover are on that account to be denied, but rather confirms them, because God has revealed them, and because he can reveal what is beyond all ideas of ours and what is beyond our capacity.

Although in matters or truths of this description reason be a subordinate source, it yet in many respects is a source of theology. For

1. It judges whether these truths in themselves or in the foundation on which they rest are agreeable to the notions of reason and of conscience. For example, revelation teaches us that man as a sinner is reconciled to God by the meritorious obedience of Christ. Reason judges of this truth that it is founded in the nature of God and in the condition of man as a sinner, and that it is agreeable to the divine perfections and to our fallen state. In this way reason approves of revealed truths as worthy of the divine being and agreeable to the dictates of conscience.

2. Reason in this respect has to do with the meaning and interpretation of Scripture, inasmuch as it will admit nothing which imposes upon it, and at the same time does not immediately reject a meaning which it does not comprehend, but only one which is in direct opposition to it. Here, therefore, a distinction must be carefully drawn between what is above and what is contrary to reason.

That is above reason which we do not understand, of which we have no clear and distinct idea, in regard to which intermediate ideas are wanting, and which is not within the compass of our rational powers. Such are many of the truths revealed in Scripture.

But it is different for a thing to be contrary to reason, to be opposed to our original notions of truth and to conscience. Even although such a thing were revealed, and although other evidences in its favour were in our possession, yet it cannot be regarded as a divine

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revelation. If any interpretation, therefore, be given of Scripture, which expresses any thing of this description, reason looks upon it as false. We reject the doctrine of transubstantiation, for instance, because it is contrary to reason. Although such a doctrine could not be refuted by any other means, yet it would be enough if it were contrary to those original notions of true and false which have been implanted within us. For we have already seen that nothing can be taught in Scripture which in this respect is contrary to reason. On this account, therefore, we may regard reason as a source of theology.

Still reason is exercised about the word of God in many ways, in instituting rules of interpretation—in comparing one part of it with another—in reasonings drawn from it—and in applying it to the various questions which from time to time arise. For it is by reason that we draw consequences from Scripture, and can settle questions by the application of its statements and by adopting various modes of reasoning. All this clearly shews what use reason has in regard to revelation.

We have thus proved that revelation is a source of theology, and it now remains that we consider it as a source, beyond which there is no other. By this two things are meant.

I. That revelation is sufficient for salvation.

II. That there is, and that there can be proved to be, no other source beyond Scripture, and therefore that traditions cannot be regarded in this light.

I. We say that revelation is sufficient for salvation. On this point also two things require to be noticed.

1. That Scripture contains every thing which is necessary to salvation.

2. That Scripture contains revelation pure, entire, and uncorrupted.

Both of these are necessary; for if one or other be wanting, revelation cannot be regarded as a source. If the whole of revelation be not comprehended in Scripture, it cannot be called a sufficient source, or if what it contains be corrupted or mutilated, it cannot be considered as an ultimate source. Hence it must have these two qualities, *perfection* and *integrity*—the former belonging to the whole of Scripture and to the revelation contained in it, and the latter to that revelation as an uncorrupted and a consistent whole.

1. We say that Scripture is perfect or contains the whole of divine revelation. By this we mean nothing more than that it contains all that it is necessary for us to know and believe,—all that is sufficient

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for salvation. Papists deny this perfection, and maintain that Scripture labours under a signal defect and must be supplemented by traditions. In opposition to them we hold that it is perfect. Here let it be observed that we are speaking not of its absolute but of its restricted perfection. The question is not whether it contains all that *may* be known, but whether it contains all that *ought* to be known in regard to salvation. We do not say that Scripture is perfect, because it contains a revelation of all which God could have communicated, but because it contains all that is necessary for salvation. Neither do we say that these things are contained in every part of it, but that they are contained in it taken as a whole and as reduced into a canon. Neither, moreover, do we maintain that all the *accidental* portions of theology are comprehended in Scripture, but only those which are fundamental. We say that the others may by legitimate inference be deduced from them. The state of the question being thus defined, the proof is easy.

(*a.*) The purpose for which revelation was committed to writing requires that it be perfect. It was given by God in order that man might be guided by it to salvation, otherwise no end would have been served by putting it on record. Scripture itself declares that this was the design, John xx. 31. But the imperfection which Papists urge is directly opposed to this design.

(*b.*) Scripture gives its own testimony on this point. "The law of the Lord is perfect, converting the soul," Ps. xix. 7. It is called perfect, as far as was then necessary to salvation. All things have been revealed and written which can serve this end. "All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness," 2 Tim. iii. 16—not only for producing every virtue, but also for perfecting the man of God. Paul gives his testimony that he had declared "all the counsel of God," Acts xx. 27. "Search the Scriptures," was our Lord's injunction, "for in them ye think ye have eternal life, and they are they which testify of me," John v. 39.

(*c.*) If Scripture is imperfect, it must be proved to us to be so. Papists sufficiently shew its perfection, inasmuch as (although they here labour hard), they can only enumerate some things which either are comprehended in Scripture or which do not pertain to salvation, as, for example, the worship of images, transubstantiation, pædobaptism, the lawfulness of admitting women to the Lord's table, the invocation of saints, &c.—some of which are false, while others of them are not of such importance as to require the authority of

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Scripture. We conclude, therefore, that the word of God, as far as this is concerned, is perfect.

2. It is requisite also that Scripture contain revelation in a pure and uncorrupted form, that is, it must be characterized by integrity in all its parts, whether these be more or less important. And we hold that this quality belongs to both.

(*a*.) We maintain the integrity of the books of which Scripture is composed, whether they be of greater or less importance, inasmuch as we have all which were designed to form the canon, both those of the Old Testament and those of the New, or, in other words, all that are required to constitute a perfect rule of faith and practice.

On this subject also we are at variance both with Papists and with others in ancient as well as modern times, who suppose that some books of the canon have perished. Nay, some have said that during the Babylonish captivity all the books of the Old Testament fell into obscurity and were lost, and that at length Ezra, under the guidance of the Spirit of God, recovered from them as much as was necessary.

We do not deny that some books, both of the Old and New Testament, written by holy men, have perished. This is evident from the mention that is made of several, which, however, are not now in existence. We read, for instance, of the books of Nathan and of Gad, in which the acts of David were recorded, 1 Chron. xxix. 29 ; of those of Nathan, Ahijah, and Iddo, who committed to writing the acts of Solomon, 2 Chron. ix. 29 ; of those of Shemaiah and Iddo who recorded the acts of Rehoboam, 2 Chron. xii. 13 ; of the book of Isaiah, in which were related the acts of Uzziah, 2 Chron. xxvi. 22 ; and of that of Jasher, who committed to writing the lamentation of David upon the melancholy death of Saul and Jonathan, and the victory which the children of Israel gained over the Amorites, Josh. x. 13 ; 2 Sam. i. 18. In like manner also the proverbs and songs of Solomon are said to have far exceeded in number those which have come down to us, 1 Kings iv. 22.

In regard to the New Testament we have reason to believe that many more books were written by the apostles, and many more letters by Paul, than are at this day in our possession. Paul speaks of an epistle which he wrote to the Corinthians, of a date anterior to that of the former of those which we now have, 1 Cor. v. 9. His letter to the Laodiceans, mentioned in Coloss. iv. 9, is not a case in point, because, as we have shewn elsewhere, that letter seems to be the same as the one which he wrote to the Ephesians.

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Notwithstanding this admission, however, we maintain that Scripture is in all its parts entire, inasmuch as it contains all the books belonging to the canon, whether these divinely or by the authority of the Church formed part of the canon.*

The books, therefore, which have been spoken of as lost did not belong to the canon. They contained, doubtless, matters both sacred and useful, but were not designed to form part of it. We have also in other places of the Old Testament the substance of their historical narrative in an abridged form, and for every good purpose sufficient for us.

This only we hold, that no book written for the necessary use of the Church and related to the canon has been lost. Such a book cannot be proved to have perished. Nay we have arguments to shew that the Scripture and the canon are entire.

(*α.*) The providence of God could not allow any book given for the necessary use of the Church to perish. His goodness requires this; for why otherwise would he have given it?

(*β.*) The Church herself has uniformly exercised a jealous care in this matter. She with the utmost vigilance preserved the sacred writings in a chest which was kept in her sacred places. These writings were wont to be read at certain stated seasons publicly in the synagogues, especially after the Babylonish captivity.

(*γ.*) It does not appear that any books except those already mentioned have been lost. It is a mere imagination that they all perished during the Babylonish captivity. No ancient writer says so. Nay, the very contrary is evident from the circumstance that, at that time, there were always prophets who had charge of the books, as Daniel, for instance, who collected from the writings of Jeremiah what was about to befal the Jews, Dan. ix. 2. The books of the New Testament, of which the canon is composed, were always in the hands of the Christians and were read in the Church. We infer, therefore, that, in respect of the books which it contains, Scripture is complete.

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* "It is one thing," says Francis Junius, "to call a book sacred, another to say that it is canonical: for every book was sacred which was edited by a prophet or apostle; but it does not follow that every such sacred book is canonical, and was designed for the whole body of the church." *Explic. in Num.* xxi. "There is no reason," says Witsius, speaking of the letters which the apostles may have written, but which are not in the canon, "why we should complain of the great loss which we have sustained, because these precious documents have perished: it is rather matter of gratitude that so many have been preserved by the kind providence of God towards us, and that they are so abundantly sufficient to instruct us in the things that pertain to salvation." *Meletemata, de vita Pauli, Sect.* vii. 11.

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In regard to matters of less importance, such as the verses, words, letters, and points, as to whether, even although we have all the books, it may nevertheless be that Scripture in these minor points is corrupted, and whether it may be regarded by us as a rule, we think it right to vindicate its integrity even in this respect. And as the corruption which has found its way into a book is either voluntary or involuntary, we have to consider whether in either of these two ways Scripture has been corrupted.

The question as to the wilful corruption of the books of Scripture, especially those of the Old Testament, is disputed between Papists and Protestants. The object of our opponents is to wrest from us these sacred books and to subject us to the Latin Vulgate. The most of them (for some have more wisdom and prudence) hold that the books of the Old Testament were corrupted by the Jews, and therefore we must try to ascertain whether such a charge is justly or invidiously preferred against them.

We have no doubt that in this matter the Jews were free from all blame, and this for the following reasons.

(*a.*) Because the Jews themselves are certainly held forth to us as entertaining a most profound and even a superstitious reverence for the text of Scripture, as is attested by Philo and Josephus.* This reverence they manifest even at the present day.

(*b.*) If the Jews had corrupted the texts, they would have done so either before or after the coming of Christ. They did not do so before he came, because he and his apostles would have brought such a charge against them. They not only, however, were not accused of doing this, but they were highly commended for the care with which they had watched over the sacred text. Neither could they do so after Christ came, because there were then copies of the Scriptures in the hands of Christians. The Jews also were scattered over every quarter of the world, so that it was impossible for them to combine in attempting such a fraud.

(*c.*) That they have not corrupted the text of Scripture is evident from this, that they have left entire some passages of the Old Testament which favour the Christian cause, and which are quoted in the books of the New Testament. These they could have easily corrupted, if they had been disposed to do so, and that not without a pretext and with but a slight alteration. Yet they have not done so.

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* Philo apud Euseb. de Præp. Evang. lib. viii. c. 2. Josephus contra Apion. lib. i. § 8.

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What then could induce them to corrupt Scripture in other parts if they have left such passages as these entire—the prophecy, for instance, regarding the seventy weeks, (Dan. ix. 24–26); the calling out of Egypt, (Hos. xi. 1) which is applied to Christ (Matt. ii. 15)? These passages they could have easily removed if they had wished, so as to weaken the arguments and evidences for the truth of the Christian religion. In like manner also in the passage, "They shall look upon me whom they have pierced," (Zech. xii. 10), which is quoted in the New Testament, (John xix. 37; Rev. i. 7), the Jews, by a very slight change upon a Hebrew word, might have made the sense to be not "upon me," but "upon him," and thus destroyed the evidence which this verse furnishes in favour of the divinity of Christ. But this they have not done. In a word, they had no wish to corrupt the text and to pervert the meaning of Scripture.

(*d.*) If, moreover, the Jews have mutilated the divine word, let it be shown in what passages they have done so; otherwise the charge brought against them is rash and groundless. Such passages, however, cannot be produced, and therefore Scripture remains entire. Some, indeed, are appealed to for the purpose of giving colour to the charge, but they are too trifling to deserve consideration. For example, "Behold a virgin shall conceive and bear a son, and shall call his name Immanuel," Is. vii. 14. Papists maintain the reading to be "shall be called," instead of "shall call." But what could have induced the Jews to make such an alteration as this, when the meaning is the same? Again, "Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Sion, . . . behold thy King cometh unto thee: he is just, and having salvation," Zech. ix. 9. Messiah is here said in Hebrew to be saved, while yet he is a Saviour. But these come to the same thing. He who is saved is the same as he who is the Saviour. He was saved from death and from judgment by his resurrection from the dead. Although the Messiah is truly called a Saviour, yet the expression "saved" is not without its force here. It denotes him who was set forth in all the amplitude of salvation, and so it represents the Messiah as "having salvation," *i.e.* salvation for himself and for his people.

There is another passage with which our opponents express no small measure of satisfaction, we mean Ps. xxii. 16. Here they say a variation has been introduced. By the change of a letter the words "they pierced," are made to read "like a lion." And this, it is affirmed, was done by the Jews in order to take away an argument in favour of the crucifixion of our Lord. It is strange, indeed, how the Jews could have fixed upon a passage like this, which is not

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quoted in the New Testament. But granting (what cannot be proved) that this passage has been corrupted, it may be that it admits of the interpretation given of it in our version, and that כאיים stands for כיי. For ם is dropped sometimes at the end of words, and א which was formerly one of the *matres lectionis, i. e.* authors or guides correct reading, and which signified that the vowel was long, was sometimes retained after the points were added. Of this we have many examples. The word, therefore, may be read כאיים, and the meaning of the passage will be that which is given in our version. We conclude, therefore, that there is no ground whatever for preferring such a charge against the Jews.

Papists, however, further appeal to the testimony of the Jews, or to the corrections of the scribes, who, they say, when revising the sacred text, changed and amended it, as if the reading in some passages had been judged not sufficiently suitable, and as if the text should be read otherwise than the connexion of the passage requires. Among such passages they mention Gen. xviii. 22. In that passage it is said, "Abraham stood yet before the Lord." But Papists say that the context requires that it should be read, "The Lord stood before Abraham." They hold, accordingly, that the scribes changed it into the form in which it now stands, when they saw it would be unsuitable to represent Jehovah as standing before Abraham rather than the contrary. But we answer, they had far more veneration for the sacred text than to introduce any such change. Nor does the TEKUN SOPHERIM signify the correction of the scribes. It only denotes a mark made by them to show that the style of the sacred writer was changed, in certain instances, to another form, because, in their opinion, such a change was to the better and more agreeable to the connexion in which the particular passage stood. In the passages thus marked, they did not alter the text, but only showed how it ought to have been written—how the connexion more properly required the style and reading to be. The correction of the scribes was thus a critical mark regarding what ought to have been written so as to suit the connexion and scope of the narrative or discourse, unless some peculiar reason had stood in the way. Thus, for instance, in the passage just quoted, "Abraham stood before the Lord," there is the TEKUN SOPHERIM, *i. e.* the scribes have marked that the writer's words are not according to the tenor of the narrative, but that, for wise reasons known to himself, he, on this occasion, departed from it.

Another passage to which they refer is contained in Ezekiel,

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(viii. 17). There it is said, "And, lo! they put the branch to their nose." The connection of the words requires that this should be written "my nose." For it is God who there speaks of the guilt of the Jews. But, in order that the writer might avoid not only the profanity but also the baseness and indecency with which they were chargeable, he changes his style and uses the words which we now have. It is evident, then, that the corrections of the scribes did not at all imply any alteration of the text, but were intended only as a critical mark.

Our opponents moreover refer to the vowel points, which, they say, were framed by the Masorites to suit their own inclination, and by which they altered and corrupted the text and involved the reading, which depends so much on these points, in great uncertainty.

(*a.*) We admit, indeed, that the Masorites framed the system of vowel points, but we deny that they did so to suit their own party purposes. They had too profound a reverence for the word of God to attempt this.

(*b.*) They have not introduced other vowels than those which we have now, but the signs of these were different from the present. They at length constantly followed the pronunciation, but they substituted not new vowels but new signs or new forms of the vowels. It is evident that no alteration happened to the text from the use of these. Although an error has here and there crept into the letters and also into the vowels, that error is not material and may be tolerated. It is plain, therefore, that the Jews have not willingly corrupted the text of Scripture.

But have they involuntarily done so, and to such an extent as to render Scripture no longer a safe rule to us? This might have happened through the carelessness of transcribers who did not distinguish between letters which, though similar in form, were yet different from each other. The question then is, have such mistakes been committed? Is Scripture in this respect also entire? We reply, that it is not uncorrupted and that yet it is entire—two statements which, if rightly understood, involve no contradiction.

(*a.*) We say it is not uncorrupted, because it cannot be denied, that, in several places, errors have found their way into the manuscripts through the negligence of transcribers. And it could not be otherwise, unless we maintain that all the transcribers were under the guidance of the Spirit of God—an opinion, however, which is contrary to reason. We know, besides, that there are errors in the manuscript copies, as is evident from the various readings. It cannot

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be denied, that an involuntary corruption of this kind has crept into Scripture. And it is surprising that divines readily make this concession regarding the books of the New Testament, as if God had exercised less vigilance over it than over the Old. They do not, however, venture to deny the fact in reference to the New Testament.

(*b.*) We maintain, notwithstanding, that Scripture has lost none of its integrity in regard either to the Old or New Testament. No errors have crept into those passages on which saving truth depends; God, in his wonderful providence, has prevented this. All the mistakes that are to be found relate, for the most part, to matters of minor importance.*

(*c*) These mistakes, besides, can be corrected by the various readings and by the application of the rules of criticism. A book may thus be said to be entire if there be means at hand by which the reading may be restored. For example, a book written by Cicero may be so called, although it may abound with errors, because we are in possession of means by which these errors may be corrected. The same holds true in regard to the word of God.

But what, it may be asked, are the sources from which the true reading is to be determined ?† We reply,

1. The comparison of parallel passages in which the same things are recorded. Not that every diversity is to be regarded in the light of a various reading, because in relating the same events the different authors and sometimes even the same authors express themselves in different ways. A careful comparison, therefore, will assist us in ascertaining the true reading—for example, of 2 Kings, xix. with Is. xxxvii; of 2 Sam. xxii. with Ps. xviii.; of 1 Chron. xvi. with Ps. cv.; and of Ps. lx. with Ps. cviii.

2. Ancient versions—such as the Samaritan text of the Pentateuch, the Chaldaic version, and in particular the Septuagint. But in using these, there is need of much caution and prudence, as the authors of them have frequently fallen into obvious mistakes on account of the absence of vowels. They themselves were sometimes to blame, and not the manuscript, because there is occasionally a discrepancy between

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* It is a singular fact that of the sixty thousand variations o the text of the New Testament and of the still larger number of that of the Old not one materially affects any of the fundamental articles of the Christian faith.

† This subject is fully discussed by Horne in his "Introduction to the study of the Scriptures," vol. ii. pp. 260, &c.

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the original manuscript and the version made of it. Sometimes, however, they afford us an opportunity of successfully restoring the true reading, and of pointing out the defect of the Masoretic copy. Cappel, in his *Critica Sacra*, gives various instances of this.* His work however should be read with great prudence and caution, for he has yielded rather too much to the suggestions of his own fancy, and is sometimes more confident than he should be.

The reading of the Masoretic manuscript is very seldom wrong. In some passages, however, the Septuagint is to be preferred. Let us take as an example Ps. cxlv. This Psalm is alphabetical, *i. e.* the verses begin with the letters of the alphabet in succession, but in the text the verse is wanting which should have begun with the letter *nun*, and in place of it the Seventy have these words: *πιστὸς κύριος ἐν τοῖς λόγοις αὐτοῦ καὶ ὅσιος ἐν πᾶσι τοῖς ἔργοις αὐτοῦ.* It is not improbable that this verse dropped out of the Hebrew text, although nearly the same words occur in the 17th verse.

(*c.*) A comparison of the Hebrew manuscripts also furnishes us with a source from which, provided there be several of them, the true reading may be accurately determined. Those which deserve to be more particularly consulted are. (1.) The manuscripts of the Eastern and Western Jews, which occasionally vary in their reading. (2.) Those of Ben Asher and of Naphtali, who have also collected some of the various readings that are to be found in the codex Venetus and Basileensis. (3.) There are some marks also by Jerome, which Morinus has referred to in his *Exercitationes Biblicæ*. (4.) An edition of the New Testament by Robert Stephens—that of the Old Testament by Sebastian Münster—the Hebrew edition of the Bible printed by Bomberg, and the edition by Plautus.

(*d.*) The letters which we find placed over the Hebrew text, and which were foolishly supposed to have some mysterious signification, are believed to have been nothing else than various readings and their marks. Instances of these occur in Judg. xviii. 12, 14, and elsewhere. A learned English author has also recently given

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* It was Cappell's object, in his work alluded to by our author, to shew that the Hebrew text of Scripture was not so entire as it was in his time generally supposed to be, and that the Hebrew points did not originate with the sacred penmen, but were the invention of the Masorites. Mosheim seems to think that this hypothesis, from the circumstance of its being so favourably received by the Romish Church, was designed to elevate oral tradition to the same rank as the written word of God. This suspicion is believed to be without foundation. Luther and Calvin, whom none will suppose to have had any leaning towards Popery, held the same views on this subject as Cappel.

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specimens of various readings from different ancient manuscripts preserved in England.

(*e.*) Among the sources of various readings may also be classed *keri* and *ketib*, marginal marks in the Hebrew manuscript, the former showing how the word should be *read*, the latter how it should be *written*. Elias Levita has collected 848 of these, which are of different kinds. (1.) If there be points alone in the text without letters, then *keri* or *ketib* is found in the margin, denoting that the word is to be so read, but not so written. Examples of this occur in Judg. xx. 13; 2 Sam. viii. 3; and elsewhere. (2.) On the other hand we sometimes find in the text letters without points. In this case *keri* or *ketib* occurs on the margin, intimating that the word is to be so written, but not so read. See 2 Sam. xiii. 33; 2 Kings v. 18. (3.) When extraordinary points are found over any word, *keri* or *ketik* is written on the margin, to intimate that the word there should be read but not written. Van Der Hooght has given a full account of these notes in his preface to the Hebrew Bible.

It is usually asked what opinion we are to form of these marginal notes. They are commonly considered as marking various readings, and some of them, it may be, deserve to be so regarded. Yet for the most part they are only critical and grammatical observations made by the Masorites with the view of fixing the true reading of the text. They are distinguished therefore from the various readings.

1. These marks originated for the most part in ignorance of the language, and in a supposed or imaginary deviation from ordinary rule. Where there seemed to be anything anomalous in the text, they endeavoured to substitute what appeared to them more analogous.

2. Some of them however may be traced to a superstitious notion among the Jews, who supposed that some words in the text were obscure and too indelicate, and that others were substituted in their room more dignified and more agreeable to our notions of propriety. See 1 Sam. v. 6; 2 Kings xviii. 27.

3. We suspect, besides, that in several places a little too much deference has been shewn by the Masorites to the Jewish people. We have a remarkable instance of this in Is. xlix. 5. The words in the text are, "though Israel be not gathered." This seemed a harsh reading, and therefore אֵלָיו is read on the margin אֵלָיו, *i. e.* "will be gathered to him."*

* See Vitringa's Observationes Sacræ, 2 vols. Amst. 1727.

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It is evident from what has been said that Scripture is *perfect* and *entire*, and therefore a sufficient source of theology.

II. We observe, further, that there is no other source higher than Scripture, and therefore we must show that those which are usually appealed to are not to be regarded in this light. We allude particularly to two—*Traditions*, namely, and *Inspirations*.

1. In regard to the former, Papists hold that Scripture does not contain all that is necessary to salvation—that it is imperfect or not entire and that its defects must be supplied by the Traditions of the Romish Church. They say that these traditions were at first communicated orally and not in writing—that they refer not only to ceremonies but to doctrines—that they proceeded moreover from Christ himself and from his apostles, first orally, and that they were afterwards preserved in a written form by the Romish Church, and are to be found in the archives of that Church. They affirm that these traditions were perfected by Christ and his apostles—that they have the same authority as Scripture—and that they supplement what Scripture wants.

It is very evident that this opinion regarding traditions is held with the view of subjecting men to the authority of the Romish Church. But it is an opinion which cannot be tolerated, and that for the following reasons.

(*a.*) Traditions are an insecure foundation on which we can never rest without fear of danger. In order that these may have any authority we must first know that they proceeded from Christ and from his apostles, and then that they have come down to us in an uncorrupted form. But how can this be ascertained? How easy is it to fall into error in regard both to their origin and integrity. For it is scarcely possible that doctrines orally delivered or committed to writing should continue uncorrupted without the peculiar superintending care of God. Men are very prone to be deceived—they are defective in memory, and liable to be influenced by party zeal, prejudices, and passion. And hence if these traditions did proceed from the apostles they might easily have been corrupted—something might have been added to them or something taken away from them, and different interpretations might have been put upon them.

(*b.*) Scripture nowhere obliges us to receive these traditions; on the contrary, Christ has warned us against them by the example of the Jews, whose traditions he often censured as being in direct opposition to Scripture, and as the cause of the obscurity in which the truth had been involved, Matt. xv. 3, 6.

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(*c.*) If traditions are to have any weight, they must belong to the universal Church, and not to any particular branch of it, such as the Church of Rome. For what privilege belongs to it which does not belong to others?

(*d.*) If traditions are intended to supply the defects of Scripture, then Scripture must not be entire, for otherwise any additions of this kind would be unnecessary. But we have already proved the integrity of the word of God; and therefore there is no occasion for them.

(*e.*) If the opinion of Papists be correct, then believers must renounce the privilege which they enjoy under the New Testament dispensation—the privilege, namely, which consists in this, that they depend on the teaching not of men but of God, and on Scripture as the only rule of their faith and practice. According to this opinion, however, they would all depend on human authority, and that the authority of the Pope.

(*f.*) If traditions moreover supplement the defects of Scripture, it must be shown in what particular passages this can be done, and what necessary thing there is which is not comprehended in Scripture. Papists indeed refer to some of these, but either they are false or of very little importance, or they may be deduced from Scripture itself.

Let us examine some of their objections.

In the *first* place they adduce Paul's words, "Therefore, brethren, stand fast, and hold the traditions which ye have been taught, whether by word or our epistle." 2 Thess. ii. 15. Traditions, we reply, mean there the truths which the teacher exhibits and delivers and which the hearer receives. This is the signification of the word among the Jews. But the apostle speaks of the doctrines as delivered either by word or epistle, by which he does not mean that he had delivered by the one mode doctrines different from what he had delivered by the other. Although he makes a distinction between oral and written communication, we are not to conclude from this that the doctrines taught in the former were not taught also in the latter; because, although all things were not written in his letter to the Thessalonians, they must yet be found in others of his writings. We must understand him, therefore, as speaking not absolutely, but in reference to the letter which he addressed to that Church.

Secondly, They refer also to what Christ says, "I have yet many things to say unto you; but ye cannot bear them now," John xvi. 12. But who, we ask, would infer from this that these things were

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not written afterwards by the apostles? Our Lord speaks in that passage of some mysteries connected with the Old and New Testament dispensation, such as the keeping of the law and the calling of the Gentiles, which the Jews could not bear at the time on account of the weakness of their understanding and of the prejudices with which they were beset, but which, when they should at length be enlightened by the Spirit, they would be able to apprehend and receive. It cannot therefore be inferred from Christ's language that the "things" to which he alludes were never committed to writing. We accordingly conclude that traditions are uncertain and unnecessary, and that we are to depend not on them but on Scripture alone.

2. Others maintain that apart from Scripture there is an internal source of Theology, immediate inspiration or illumination, namely, by the Spirit of God, by which men know what is to be believed and practised, and frequently even what is to come to pass, without having any need of the written word which, they say (and in so saying they cast dishonour on the word), is only the letter, not the Spirit. These persons are usually called Enthusiasts, Mystics, and Quietists. Their opinion however is inadmissible—not that we hold them as denying that the word is a dead letter in the absence of the operation of the Holy Spirit, without whose illumination men cannot attain spiritual life, but because they consider the Spirit as acting upon men and leading them not by means of the written word but by some secret process, and enabling them by his internal illumination to attain the knowledge of the truths contained in the word. According to them, therefore, Scripture is a book suited only for children, of which matured believers do not stand in need. This, however, we not only do not admit, but hold to be a dangerous error.

(*a.*) Because Scripture is perfect and useful to all, Rom. xv. 4; 2 Tim. iii. 16. There can be no ultimate source, therefore, besides Scripture which is the word of God. If he intended by inspiration to enlighten and to instruct men, then certainly there would have been no occasion for that word. But the very circumstance of his having given a written revelation of his will proves that it was not his design to impart knowledge to his people by direct communication.

(*b.*) Because Scripture conjoins and never separates the word and the Spirit, Is. lix. 21; Jer. xxxi. 31–34.

(*c.*) Because the consequences of this opinion are hurtful in the extreme. If the written word be not a standard by which the operations of the Spirit are to be limited and tried, then man will be liable to every delusion and will be easily led astray, and there will

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be no opinion for which arguments may not be adduced. We know by experience that men holding this opinion have been hurried into error, and even prompted to the commission of dishonourable and wicked deeds. Their opinion, therefore, is deservedly rejected.

(*d.*) Because Scripture expressly warns us against believing every Spirit, 1 John iv. 1; and enjoins us to "prove all things" and to "hold fast that which is good," 1 Thess. v. 21.

We come now to consider the *third* general head, that namely which relates to the use of revelation or of Scripture, as a source from which we derive the knowledge of matters both of faith and of duty. For what benefit will it confer upon us if we are not able or do not know how to use it? We take for granted of course that it is useful to all without distinction, not only to ministers but to the people of every rank and every character, and that it is their duty to read it in order to learn from it all that is necessary to salvation.

Here again we come into collision with the Papists, who restrict the use of Scripture to certain individuals, we mean the clergy, and forbid the reading of it to the laity, except by the permission of the priest. Such was the decision of the Council of Trent. Pope Pius IV. mitigated to a certain extent the rigour of this decree, by giving power to the priest to allow the reading of Scripture to whom he pleased.* Clemens VIII., however, withdrew this power,† so that it became a capital offence to have bibles in the Church; nay many (to the eternal disgrace of men professing to be Christians) were burned with their bibles placed upon their heads. Who does not perceive the tendency of this mystery of iniquity? to keep men bound, namely by the fetters of a blind adherence to the Romish Church, without their ever or by any means being able to discover their errors. We deem it unnecessary to say much in refutation of such a dogma; still we may observe the following things.

(*a.*) If it be asked whether Scripture is ever represented to us as restricted in its use to a certain class of men, we reply, no. On the contrary the reading of it is enjoined upon all. "Search the

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* This Pope, in the preface to his *Index librorum prohibitorum*, says, "Judicio Episcopi sive Inquisitoris stetur, ut cum consilio parochi vel confessarii Bibliorum a catholicis auctoribus versorum lectionem in vulgari lingua eis concedere possint, quos intellexerint ex hujusmodi lectione non damnum capere posse."—Canon. Concil. Trident. Romæ, 1834. pag. 213.

† Clemens VIII. declared by the indulgence of Pius IV. "nullam de novo tribui facultatem Episcopis vel Inquisitoribus aut Regularium Superioribus concedendi licentiam emendi, *legendi*, aut retinendi Biblia vulgari lingua edita." The indulgence referred to was at length withdrawn by Gregory XV.

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Scriptures," John v. 39. "They have Moses and the prophets, let them hear them," Luke xvi. 29. The Bereans are commended, because "they searched the Scriptures daily," Acts xvii. 11. All without distinction are pronounced blessed, who meditate "in the law of the Lord," Ps. i. 2;—who read and "hear the words of this prophecy," Rev. i. 3. Paul exhorts us to "prove all things," and to "hold fast that which is good," 1 Thess. v. 21. The reading of Scripture, therefore, is nowhere restricted to any particular class of men. They who impose such a restriction know not what they do.

(*b.*) But do the proofs which Scripture itself affords on this subject relate to its universal or restricted use? No one will doubt that they relate only to the former. For as the way of life is exhibited in the word of God in order that all may walk in it, the contents of the word belong to all, it is the interest of all to be acquainted with what it reveals. It is the legacy bequeathed by the Father to all the heirs of salvation, and why therefore should not all have access to it? If it prove that it belongs to all why should it be confined to a few?

(*c.*) The apostles wished that their letters should be read publicly in the churches, as the law was read in the synagogues. And as Scripture undoubtedly ought to be read in the hearing of others, so certainly should it be read privately; for if the latter be unlawful so also is the former.

(*d.*) Every one should be firmly persuaded in his own mind as to what he believes, and should be able to assign a reason for his faith; but this is impossible unless he has access to Scripture, from which alone the knowledge of saving truth can be derived.

(*e.*) What reason in short can be given for such a ridiculous practice, when assuredly it has no foundation in Scripture itself? Papists can plead nothing but the fear which they entertain of heresy. The laity, they urge, by their not being able to understand Scripture would easily be led to put upon it an erroneous interpretation. But this is only an abuse of Scripture, and is no reason why we should be deprived of the opportunity of making a right use of it. The best things are liable to be thus treated, but still the use of them remains. Peter indeed speaks of some of the letters of Paul, in which there are some things which the unlearned may wrest, yet he does not say that these letters are not to be read, 2 Pet. iii. 16. This, besides, is only a pretext on the part of the Papists, and not their real reason. Their real reason is a fear entertained by them lest the interests of their church should be injured, lest their adherents should have their eyes opened and

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be alienated from the Catholic faith, for this in their estimation is a grievous deadly error. But if the reason which they allege be the true one, then the people should be prevented from hearing the word read and explained. Errors, however, originate not so much with the people as with those who profess to be their teachers. It is with them that the abuse of Scripture begins. We conclude, therefore, that Scripture is designed for universal use.

In order to use Scripture aright several things are required. These necessarily follow from the proposition which we have just laid down. For as Scripture is intended for universal use it must be in the power of all to use it, and men must be disposed and fitted to use it in the proper way. The things that are required may be considered as relating

I. To Scripture itself.

II. To the individuals who are to use it.

I. In regard to Scripture itself, it is necessary

(*a.*) *That it be perspicuous.*

(*b.*) *That it exist in the vernacular tongue of those who are in possession of it.*

Both of these are indispensable—so much so that, if either be wanting, the proposition—that the use of Scripture is designed for all—is untenable.

Unless it *be characterized by perspicuity*, all cannot make the proper use of it even although it should be translated into their own language.

(*a.*) Papists deny the perspicuity of Scripture, and say that it cannot be understood without danger of falling into error except by the judgment and determination of those who are infallibly guided by the Holy Spirit, such as the Roman pontiff and an œcumenical or general council, whose province it is authoritatively to settle the meaning of Scripture. They hold that otherwise its style is obscure, and cannot be understood—an opinion which has for its object the subjection of our faith to the authority of their church.

In opposition to them we maintain the perspicuity of the Word of God. We do not mean to say that every thing in it in regard both to matter and style is equally clear. We are aware that it contains many things, as Peter says of the contents of some of Paul's epistles, "hard to be understood," difficulties which require careful and laborious investigation, and that a larger amount of assistance is needed in ascertaining the meaning of some passages than others. So that he who wishes to understand the word in all its fulness, in respect to

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its several parts, in its connexion, in its aim, and in the expressions employed, must avail himself of every means within his reach. Neither do we mean to say that it is equally clear to the apprehension of all, in whatever spirit and with whatever qualifications they may come to the examination of it. But we say, in the *first* place, that there is no ambiguity in regard to fundamental articles or to those which, whether in matters of faith or duty, are necessary to salvation; and, in the *second* place, that it is perspicuous to those who, without prejudice and prompted by a desire to learn the truth, apply themselves to the study of it, attentively read it and reflect upon it, compare it with itself, and make use of the means which are within their reach. We exclude all human authority, we admit no infallible instructor. We say that to all who study it with due attention and diligence and in the use of means it is not only intelligible but clear and perspicuous. And our reasons for saying so are these.

1. God's design in committing to writing this revelation of his will would not otherwise have been accomplished. His design is and can only be, that all who read his word may be made wise unto salvation. But if it were not perspicuous, men would not be able to derive from it such saving knowledge. His design moreover is that they should depend not on human authority, but on his own—that they should all be taught of himself, and not consider it necessary to call any man Rabbi, Master, or Teacher. If Scripture, however, be obscure—if the interpretation of it depend on man, then they would be under the necessity of receiving this interpretation, and of acknowledging the interpreter to be under the guidance of the Spirit of God. In giving his word, therefore, he would have failed in his design, which is, as we have already said, that all may attain the knowledge of that truth which is necessary to salvation.

2. Scripture gives its own testimony on this subject. Moses declares that it is not necessary for any one to ascend to heaven, or to go beyond the sea in search of the law, Deut. xxx. 12–14. Paul says the same concerning the gospel, Rom. x. 6–8. He moreover expressly affirms, "If our gospel be hid, it is hid to them that are lost," 2 Cor. iv. 3. Hence Scripture is compared to the light of the sun, Ps. xix. 5, 6; and to a lamp, Ps. cxix. 105.

3. If Scripture be so obscure as not to be intelligible to the people, it should be shewn on what subjects relating to doctrine or duty this obscurity rests. But none such can be produced, and therefore Scripture is not liable to the charge brought against it.

4. If Scripture be as obscure as it is said to be, why did the apos-

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tles deliver addresses and write letters to the people? These addresses and these letters are in our possession. If we cannot understand them, then they were committed to writing in vain. But they were understood by those for whose use they were first written, for they were designed for the whole Church, and were read in their public assemblies. This supposes that Scripture was not unintelligible at that time. And if it could be understood in early times, why may it not be understood now? We have the same faculties as the primitive Christians had—the same power of understanding and judging—we have the same Scriptures in our possession, and if any obscurity rest on them, it must be such as arises from our ignorance of the language in which they were at first conveyed.

But, say the Papists, Peter acknowledges that in Paul's epistles there are some things "hard to be understood," 2 Pet. iii. 16. This we admit; but does it follow that all things necessary to salvation are of this description? He does not say that *all*, but that *some* things only are so; and who will affirm that fundamental articles are among the number? He does not speak absolutely in regard to the things themselves, but relatively to those whose minds are under the influence of prejudice or passion, for he says that the things to which he alludes may be easily wrested by the "unlearned and unstable."

But, say the Papists again, if there be no obscurity in Scripture, whence have arisen the dissensions and heresies by which Christians have been split into so many sections? These certainly would have been unknown if Scripture were so clear as we maintain it to be. But we deny that there are so many dissensions in matters necessary to salvation. Christians, with few exceptions, are at one in regard to matters both of faith and of practice. The differences that do exist arise not from the obscurity of Scripture, but from the inattention and rash judgment of men themselves, or from the prejudices and passions by which they are enslaved. But, in order to understand Scripture aright, there must be, as experience clearly proves, readiness of mind to receive the truth and honesty of purpose in searching for it. It cannot be inferred, therefore, that Scripture is obscure to such an extent as to require an infallible interpreter before it can be explained or understood. If a man will shut his eyes while the light is shining around him, it does not follow that to others all is darkness.

(*b.*) But we said that *Scripture must exist in the vernacular tongue of those who are in possession of it.* This implies that versions of Scripture are lawful and necessary. Papists say that

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they are not, while at the same time they regard the Vulgate as authentic. Their meaning is that Scripture should be translated for the purpose of subjecting men to the authority of their own church. But,

1. Both the nature of the thing and the position we have laid down in regard to the use of Scripture as pertaining to all men render a translation of it into the vernacular tongue absolutely necessary. It is designed for all; but all are not acquainted with the languages in which it was originally written, and therefore it must be presented in the language of those into whose hands it comes.

2. God himself has declared it to be his intention that all should read his word in their own tongue, and that the way of salvation should be plain and obvious to all. For this reason he gave it in those languages which were familiar to the people who first received it—the Old Testament in Hebrew, and the New Testament in Greek at the time when that language was almost universally spoken.

3. The Church in all ages has acknowledged this to be the use of Scripture, and has been at pains to translate it into the vernacular tongue. Hence we have the Chaldee and Greek versions of the Old Testament, the latter of which was chiefly employed by the apostles. After their time and when the Church was scattered over the whole world, Scripture was translated into the ancient Italic, and in subsequent times into the languages of those nations into which it was carried.

4. No objection can be urged against translations—no injury is done by them to Scripture itself. Papists say that it will thus find its way into the hands of the laity, from whom they are anxious to keep it, in order that, as they allege, they may be preserved from falling into error in interpreting the word of God. Versions they hold are fallible and not to be trusted, because we cannot learn from them what revelation really is. We admit, as well as they, that versions are fallible; we do not say that they are altogether free from errors, or that they always convey the full meaning of the original. But we do say, notwithstanding, that those who are ignorant of the languages in which Scripture was first written may repose implicit confidence in them in all matters pertaining to salvation. In this respect versions are quite proper, and the laity may form from them as correct an opinion on necessary truth as if they read the original itself. The argument of the Papists, besides, proves nothing, because it proves too much. For they admit popular addresses in the vernacular tongue—addresses too by fallible men.

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These, however, should be rejected on the same ground on which they forbid the private reading of the word.

II. But we said that there is another thing requisite to the right use of Scripture besides what has reference to Scripture itself, that we mean which relates to those into whose hand Scripture comes. This we may state generally is faith—a persuasion that Scripture is divine. Without this it is impossible to derive benefit from it. If they do not believe that it has been given by God, they cannot use it for the purpose for which it has been given, they cannot regard it as the foundation of their faith and submit to its authority. It did not profit the Jews, because it was not "mixed with faith in them that heard it," Heb. iv. 2. And, therefore, if we would use it aright, we must receive it as in deed and in truth the word of the living God.

What then let us enquire, is (1) the nature of this faith, and (2) its origin?

1. This faith is the assent which we give to the truth that Scripture has been given us by God. It is not theoretical or speculative merely, but practical and saving. In the exercise of it we receive the word as true and hold the revelation contained in the word to be divine. It is a matter of some importance, however, to know in what way we are to hold this. Our faith, in order to be true, must have certain properties by which it may be distinguished from that which is false.

(*a.*) It must embrace the whole of revelation and not some portion of it only—not merely the promises but the threatenings also—not merely the doctrines but also the precepts—it must, in a word, be a universal assent.

(*b.*) It must regard the word as not only true but as deserving of our love, as containing saving truth, as worthy of God, and as indispensably necessary to us. We must receive it, therefore, willingly, with entire acquiescence, with the whole heart.

(*c.*) It must receive the whole of revelation contained in Scripture as the standard of faith and as the rule of conduct—not as if it had little reference to us, but as the directory to whose authority in matters of faith and duty we are bound implicitly to submit.

(*d.*) It must receive Scripture with a conviction and persuasion affecting the whole soul, and bringing all its faculties into complete subjection to its power—a conviction and persuasion based on the divine testimony, leaving nothing doubtful, and exerting such an influence upon the mind that the individual who is the subject of it is

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prepared to conform himself entirely to the word. It is, in short, an assent resting on a divine foundation—not on the circumstance of our receiving Scripture from men who say that it is from God, but on the fact of its bearing upon it undoubted marks of its heavenly origin; so that we attach to it the importance which it claims—regard it with feelings of reverence and affection—make it the subject of our perusal and meditation—continually recur to it in seasons of controversy or of doubt, and submit to its decisions as authoritative and final.

2. What is the origin of this faith? According to Papists it is produced by the testimony of the Romish Church and is based upon her authority. They maintain that, in the absence of the testimony which she bears to the Divine authority of Scripture, Scripture has of itself no authority whatever. They do not mean, as is supposed by some among ourselves, that they by their testimony can make the word divine, or that the word of God has no authority unless it be stamped also with the authority of their church. They properly distinguish between the authority of Scripture in itself and in its reference to us. They say that in the former case it is authoritative considered as the word of God; but that in the latter case it is not unless we have clear proof that it really proceeds from him. But whence are we to derive this proof? They tell us that it must be sought for in the testimony of the Romish Church. They pretend that the laity are unable to discern the marks of divinity which are to be found in Scripture or to form any opinion regarding them. Such marks, they admit, are contained in the word itself; but the great majority of men are not in circumstances to be able to discover them and require assistance from some other quarter. This, they tell us, is the design of the testimony of their church; and this testimony, according to them, is sufficient to produce faith.

But this we deny for the following reasons

(*a.*) The testimony of the Romish Church cannot serve as a sufficient foundation on which to rest our faith unless it be proved that that church is infallible. For if she be not, the foundation is insecure. We must first be assured that she cannot err before we can depend upon her testimony. And if we are to believe in her infallibility, we must do so on the authority of Scripture. But as the divinity of Scripture is obviously the very point in debate, we cannot appeal to it. Does this infallibility then rest on numbers? Unquestionably not. Men who are individually fallible can never in a united capacity become infallible. The mere circumstance of their being formed

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into a church cannot effect such a change. They still remain collectively what they were separately; they are still liable to fall into error. We have evidence of this in the case of the Jews in the time of Christ, of the heathen, Mohammedans, and others. So far indeed from a church's being infallible, it will appear from what follows, and also from what we have said in our Ecclesiastical History,* that Scripture and experience prove the very reverse. As therefore the infallibility of the Romish Church cannot be established, we are certainly justified in concluding her testimony to be an insufficient foundation on which to rest our faith.

(*b.*) The testimony of the Romish Church contradicts the express declarations of Christ himself, who said, "I receive not testimony from man," John v. 34. Our faith must be divine not human. Being in its nature an inward conviction, it cannot be produced by man or by the Romish Church, but by God alone.

(*c.*) We might advert to the consideration that this subjection of our faith to the authority of the Romish Church robs the children of God of one of their greatest privileges, that brother namely is not authoritatively to teach brother. But, waiving this, let us see to what Papists appeal in confirmation of their opinion. The Church, they say, is called "the pillar and ground of truth," 1 Tim. iii. 15. Now, not to mention that these words refer not to the Church but to what is said in the following verse, "without controversy, great is the mystery of godliness: God manifest in the flesh," &c., truths on which the Church herself rests, and which, for this reason, we call fundamental truths; not to mention this, we say, because it may be called in question, we reply, that, supposing the Church be meant, it is not the Romish or any particular Church, but the whole primitive apostolic Church, between which and that of Rome there is so wide a difference. It is not in the remotest degree probable that the apostle here gives to the Church the title of the "pillar of truth" in the sense which the Papists affix to it, as if the truth rested upon the Church. He seems to speak rather of the Church itself resting on the truth as on a pillar, not declaring, on its own authority, that this or that is the word of God, unless it has its foundation in the word itself. In this latter sense, the name given to it is an appropriate one, inasmuch as it represents the Church as based on Scripture, which is the source of all truth. This passage, therefore, gives no countenance to the opinion of the Papists.

* Institutiones Historiæ Ecclesiæ, vol. v. pp. 36, 40.

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What, then, is the real origin of this faith ?

(*a.*) There is, in the *first* place, its *formal* cause, by which we mean nothing more than the reason why we believe Scripture to be divine. This, in our opinion, is just the evidence which Scripture itself, when carefully examined, presents to our notice, and which embraces the arguments we have already adduced for its divinity. In order that our faith may be rational—in order that our conviction may be such as to produce a feeling of security, we must be able to assign a reason for it. If a man say that he is convinced by the Holy Spirit of the divinity of Scripture while yet he cannot shew the reason of his conviction, he says what is not true. It is one thing to be convinced and another thing to shew why he is convinced. He must do the latter if his faith be reasonable. And there can be no reason fitted to fix in our minds a persuasion of the divine origin of Scripture but the light and evidence of Scripture itself.

(*b.*) There is also the *material* cause, or the means by which this faith is produced. These means are partly the perusal of Scripture and the gathering from it, by careful meditation, the proofs of its divinity ; and partly the assistance of others who, in the capacity of teachers, point out these marks and press them upon our attention. Among the latter we rank the Church which throws light on this subject. But she has also in particular a testimony in herself to the divinity of the word, and adduces in defence of it an argument drawn from her own history. The primitive church, for instance, at the time when the sacred books were written, could easily ascertain whether they were sent by God. For several succeeding centuries the Church rested on the word as her foundation, and, in doing so, has given her testimony to its divine original. For unless it had had this high origin, the Church built upon it could not have persevered and surmounted all the obstacles which she encountered, so as to defy even the gates of hell itself. In this way the Church may bear testimony to the divine origin of the Scriptures, and in this sense the saying of Augustine must be held true—a saying which Papists misconstrue, as if he represented faith as based on the authority of the Church. But we think that he had no intention of doing so, for he speaks not of the divinity but of the genuineness of Scripture. Between these two things there is all the difference in the world. It is one question whether the books of Scripture were written by those whose names they bear, and it is quite another question whether these books are divine. It was not the latter of these which Augustine had in his view but the former, which depends entirely on the authority of the

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Church bearing testimony to it. For, except on that authority, we cannot know that these books were really written by their respective authors. But whatever meaning may be put upon his words is a matter of little importance to us, because they were uttered by him when he had only recently passed from Manichæism to Catholicism, or when he was still an adherent of the former sect.

(*c.*) The *efficient* cause of this faith is the Holy Spirit, without whose operations on the mind it can have no existence. He is the Spirit of faith, not because his testimony is the *formal* cause or the reason why we believe. This would lead to enthusiasm. His testimony is never separated from the reasons which prove Scripture to be divine, but uniformly goes along with them; otherwise, as we have already said, our faith would be enthusiasm, from which many amongst ourselves are not far removed. If then, in answer to the question "Why do we believe," we say because the Spirit informs us, this is enthusiasm because we believe without reason. Faith, in order to be rational, must have grounds on which to rest—not the bare testimony of the Spirit, but the manifestation to us by the Spirit of the evidences for the divinity of Scripture—his impressing upon our minds the strength of these evidences—and his awakening within us the feeling of security which they are designed to produce. The Spirit is thus not the *formal* but the *efficient* cause of the faith of which we are speaking.

And he is so because he produces in us that disposition which fits us for understanding and judging of the arguments for the divinity of Scripture. He sets the mind free from those prejudices and passions by which we are fettered and rendered unable to judge of these arguments. He gives them weight sufficient to produce conviction, and makes that conviction strong, satisfactory, and enduring. His operation in this respect is absolutely necessary. We are naturally so blind, so beset by prejudices, and so unstable in our judgment, that, although the evidences may be sufficiently strong, we scarcely trust ourselves—we have always a lingering doubt that we may be deceived. In order therefore that our persuasion may be full the aid of the Spirit is necessary. And hence Scripture ascribes every good motion of the mind to him. It is he who, as in the case of Lydia, opens the heart. But of this we will speak when we treat of the grace of God. This being granted, then, and without entering farther into the proof that Scripture is designed to be, and may be, used by all—that perspicuity and translation into the vernacular languages are necessary—and that

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faith on our part in the divinity of Scripture is indispensable, let us now proceed to consider—

III. The use of revelation. Here it will be necessary to advert at some length (1.) to the meaning of Scripture in the right understanding of which its use consists, (2.) to the means by which this meaning may be ascertained, (3.) to the way in which we may become certain that we have ascertained it.

(1.) We define the meaning of Scripture to be *all that is comprehended in the connexion of the words, things, and propositions of any passage according to the mind or intention of the speaker, whether of the Spirit directly or of those who were employed to write at the dictation of the Spirit.*

This definition points to what is *material* and what is *formal* of the sense of Scripture.

The *material* of the sense of Scripture is all that the words, things, and propositions represent to us. We must also consider whence this sense of Scripture arises. It arises

a. From the *words*, and comprehends all that is represented to us by the grammar and genius of the language and by the use, whether primary or secondary, whether ordinary or peculiar, of the terms employed.

(*β.*) From the *things*, or from the application of the words to the subject, and comprehends that which the subject really represents to us. For example, Gospel in the former sense or in its verbal signification denotes good news; in the latter or considered in its application to the subject, it means those good news which relate to the accomplishment of the divine promises in the Messiah, the reconciliation of sinners to God, and the establishment of the economy of grace.

(*γ.*) From the *propositions*, and includes all the ideas which the propositions suggest. Now a proposition consists of three parts—the subject, the predicate, and the copula—the last of which is either expressed or understood. Thus *God is a Spirit* and *eternal life is the free gift of God* are complete propositions. A proposition may also be simple or compound. The meaning to which we now allude includes all that the consideration of any proposition presents to us. The proposition *eternal life is the gift of God* contains various ideas, both positive and negative, which naturally suggest themselves to our minds and which constitute the *propositional* sense.

We are now to consider the *formal* sense, because the words,

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phrases, and propositions may comprehend much, which in the particular passage the writer or speaker did not intend to convey. We must, therefore, ascertain the precise meaning—we must endeavour to find out what the design of the speaker was. This will be discovered by applying the rules laid down in interpreting the word—rules which have reference not only to the signification of words and phrases, but also to their meaning in the particular connexion in which they stand with what precedes and what follows.

To these we must prefix a definition of the *formal* sense. It is to ascertain the mind and scope of the author, and what it is he is aiming at. Of this, however, we must judge from the signification of the words, as well as from the scope and connexion of the passage, the analogy of faith, and the notions of our own conscience to which the sense of Scripture cannot be contrary.

By attending to these rules it will easily be seen that we are to regard as the meaning of Scripture that which the words and phrases according to their real use and signification primarily and directly denote, provided it be not opposed to any part of the passage or to any of the rules of interpretation. But in addition to this there is the literal meaning, which comprehends every thing which the words in their full and unrestricted signification imply, in as far as there is no reason in Scripture for rejecting it. This is properly called the literal, primary, or direct sense, because it is naturally suggested by the words and phrases understood according to the ordinary mode of speaking or the style of Scripture. Reason and the nature of the thing teach us that we are to consider as the meaning of Scripture whatever is not inconsistent with any part of the narrative or discourse. For as God addresses us according to our own mode of speaking, he must unquestionably design to be understood by us in the sense in which language is employed by us, and must accordingly speak according to the ordinary usage of words. But we have said that words and phrases may refer to more than one subject, and may, according to the intention of the Holy Spirit, have two or more meanings, not indeed meanings totally different from each other and having nothing in common, but meanings which may be and are mutually connected. Let us illustrate this by an example or two. Christ says of the Jews, "They hated me without a cause," John xv. 25. This may mean both without a cause and without effect or ineffectually; because in regard to him both were true. In like manner Noah is called "a preacher of righteousness," 2 Peter ii. 5. This righteousness may mean either that which is imputed or that which is inherent—that is,

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he preached the remission of sins as righteousness imputed, or holiness as righteousness wrought in the soul by the Spirit of God. We read also, "the zeal of thine house hath eaten me up," Ps. lxix. 9. By *house* in this passage we may understand either the material temple at Jerusalem or the spiritual temple, that is, the Church. Christ, when he quoted the passage, applied it to the former, John ii. 17. He is said to be "the end of the law," Rom. x. 4 He is so, inasmuch as he is the design and consummation of the law. Both are true. He is on the one hand the end or design for which the law was given, Gal. iii. 24; while on the other the law was fulfilled in him and ceased with him. He said on one occasion. "And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all *men* unto me," John xii. 32. This *lifting up* may refer to his ascension, and this seems to us to be its more direct meaning. But it may refer also to his being elevated on the cross,—a signification in perfect harmony with the former, because his exaltation to glory was the consequence and reward of his crucifixion. Nay, it was what Christ himself had in view when he spoke these words, for in the next verse John says, "this he said, signifying what death he should die." Again Christ calls himself "Alpha and Omega," Rev. i. 8; meaning by this that he is the first and the last, both in regard to his nature as God and in regard to the economy of grace. These examples shew in what sense a twofold literal meaning is sometimes admissible. Cocceius,* the most celebrated interpreter of Scripture, meant nothing more than this when he said, *The words of Scripture mean all that they can mean.* This saying has been misunderstood by many; for he adds in several places, *provided it do no violence to any part of the discourse*—a limitation which must be carefully attended to by the interpreter of Scripture, otherwise he may make Scripture say any thing he pleases. Papists have abused this rule in drawing from the word of God various and opposite meanings; whereas it only implies that the same word or phrase may refer to more things than one in the intention of the speaker, provided no violence be done to the rules of interpretation, and that the meanings of Scripture, though manifold, are yet intimately connected with each other. This is evident

* Cocceius was professor of divinity at Leyden in the 17th century. He was characterised by learning and piety, but, in his interpretation of Scripture, showed more fancy than judgment, and compiled from it a system full of mystery and extravagance. His method of interpretation was in favour with the divines of the Dutch school, and Venema who belonged to that school seems to hold him in high estimation.

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(*a.*) From the wisdom and omniscience of God, who speaks to us in his word. For as the Spirit who dictated the word is possessed of infinite wisdom, and knew what the words which he employed mean, and certainly whether some of them might have a double meaning without involving any contradiction, we must suppose when he employed such, that he intended them to be understood in both significations. If he did not, then he would, by using them, have led us into error.

(*b.*) Unless it be admitted that this twofold sense was intended by the speaker, it is obvious that the interpretation must be doubtful and the meaning ambiguous. If there be but one sense in which any word or phrase was designed to be understood, then there must be a proof that the Spirit positively intended to convey that meaning and no other. But as such a proof is often wanting, it will be uncertain whether he may not at the same time have designed another meaning than that which it primarily bears. We hold, therefore, that this double sense was intended, otherwise the real interpretation will be involved in uncertainty and doubt.

(*c.*) If the apostles and evangelists found in the words of Scripture that which they really mean, we also may derive from them a no less extensive signification. We have an example of this in what is said of our Lord, "He hath borne our griefs," Is. liii. 4. An evangelist shews that this must be literally understood of our bodily diseases, "Himself took our infirmities, and bare *our* sicknesses," Matt. viii. 17. The meaning of Scripture is thus what David calls "exceeding broad," Ps. cxix. 96. We are not, however, to give loose reins to our own fancy and make every passage say what we please. There are certain rules of interpretation, as we shall presently shew, which must ever be carefully kept in view.

(*d.*) If there be a reason for rejecting the literal meaning, it must be given up. And there are two ways in which this may be done—either by absolutely abandoning it, and substituting another in its place, or by retaining it and investigating into the higher and more recondite application that may be made of it. The former is called its *tropical* or *figurative*, the latter, its *mystical* or *spiritual* meaning.

The figurative sense is to be sought for in those cases in which reason or the connexion of the passage prevents us from assigning to the words the meaning which they ordinarily and naturally bear. If then there be a reason why the literal sense cannot be used, we must have recourse to the figurative sense, regard as the meaning of Scripture whatever rhetorical figures require, and ap-

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ply in the interpretation of it whatever rules rhetoric furnishes. If a word is taken in a wider sense to mean all that the Holy Spirit directly intends, when speaking in contradistinction to a mystical meaning which is involved in it in those cases in which Scripture speaks tropically and by a figure, then no regard is to be paid to the literal sense.

Scripture speaks of God after the manner of men, when it ascribes to him parts and properties which belong to us. In so doing it accommodates itself to our modes of thinking and speaking, and must be understood not literally but figuratively. It sometimes also speaks of things according to their external appearance. The land seems to the sailor to approach to him, the sun to move from east to west, and the moon to be a body having light in itself. Now when Scripture speaks as it sometimes does, agreeably to these appearances, we are not to put a literal interpretation upon its statements, but to understand them as merely an accommodation to the style of speaking common among men. Even we ourselves employ many expressions which are not to be literally understood. We know for instance that the sun does not move from east to west, and yet we sometimes speak as if it did, because to outward appearance it seems to do so. We find also in Scripture several forms of speech in which a thing is magnified beyond the truth. Thus when trees are represented as reaching even to heaven, nothing more is meant than that they are very high. A careful consideration of these and of other figurative expressions will assist us in understanding many things in Scripture which at first sight are encompassed with difficulties.

The mystical sense is something besides the direct or literal or figurative meaning, and is ascertained by a more recondite consideration of the words and of the things to which they are applied. The spiritual presupposes the literal meaning, but it contains something more deducible either from the words or things, and discoverable only by careful and attentive investigation. For example, Caiaphas said to the chief priests and the Pharisees, "Ye know nothing at all, Nor consider that it is expedient for us that one man should die for the people, and that the whole nation perish not," John xi. 49, 50. Besides the direct and literal meaning intended by the high priest this passage has a more recondite signification—a signification, however, which the Spirit designed to convey. For Caiaphas is said to have prophesied regarding the death of Christ (verse 51). In this light the words point to our Lord as an expiatory sacrifice for the salvation of the people. Thus also we read,

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"God hath spoken once; twice have I heard this; that power *belongeth* unto God," Ps. lxii. 11. Besides the direct sense of these words which is easily understood, there is a remoter meaning in the phrase *speaking once* and *hearing twice*. In the former there is an allusion to the declaration made by God only once after the fall that there was mercy with him and that salvation was to be found in him, Exod. xxxiv. 6, 7; while the latter refers to the two dispensations the Old and the New, to the sayings of prophets and apostles all of whom bear testimony to the truth that all power belongs to God. Again, the Messiah is prophesied as a "Branch" that was to grow out of the roots of Jesse, Is. xi. 1. In the word Branch (נצר) there is a more recondite meaning,—even a prediction concerning the city (Nazareth) in which Christ was to be brought up—a prediction which, as we find from Gospel history, was fulfilled, Matt. ii. 23. In investigating this mystical sense, however, in the words and phrases employed in Scripture, interpreters must exercise much prudence and discretion, and have recourse to it only when they have strong reasons to give in support of it.

But the mystical sense is so called inasmuch as things indicated to us by the literal sense are transferred to things connected with the New Testament to which they have some correspondence, whether these be typical and emblematical or heavenly and spiritual. Hence we have the different names that are given to this sense.

In the *first place* if we consider the meanings as figured or shadowed forth, then the things are either types or emblems. Between these there is this difference. Types are expressly and directly designed by God to serve their purpose as such, that is, to signify and express something higher, and would not have been so designed if God had not had this purpose in view. We have them in most of the legal ceremonies, as the Paschal Lamb, &c. Emblems again represent spiritual things by a certain similitude without however being expressly appointed by God to do so, such as the material creation, light, the sun, paradise, &c. Both at the same time have this in common—there is a correspondence between them and spiritual things. In like manner the seven apocalyptic churches are regarded as emblems of events that were afterwards to happen in the Church.

In the *second place* if we attend to the things shadowed forth, they are either heavenly or spiritual, terrestrial or moral. In respect of these the mystical sense is divided into *anagogical, allegorical,* and *tropological.*

(1.) The *anagogical,* which implies the application of external

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things to those which are spiritual or heavenly. Thus paradise is said to be an emblem of heaven.

(2.) The *allegorical*, which means that external things represent and are applied to spiritual things under the New Testament. The term is employed by Paul when he refers to the history of Sarah and Hagar as representing the two covenants, Gal. iv. 24.

(3.) The *tropological*, meaning by this the transference and application of external things to the duties which it is incumbent upon us to perform. For example, it is expressly commanded in the Old Testament, "Thou shalt not muzzle the ox when he treadeth out *the corn*," Deut. xxv. 4. Paul explains this injunction *tropologically*, and shews that the injunction may be applied to the right which ministers of the gospel have to a decent and suitable maintenance, 1 Cor. ix. 9–11.

The literal meaning and the three kinds of the mystical now mentioned are usually expressed in the following lines—

Litera gesta docet, quid credas *allegoria*,
Moralis quid agas, quo tendas *anagogia*.

But is there in reality such a mystical meaning as that of which we have now spoken? By Christians in all ages it has generally been supposed that there is, although some, in consequence of the liberty taken by interpreters, have gone into the opposite extreme. We must admit that the Fathers and many of those who succeeded them have abused this mode of interpretation, but this is no reason why it should be altogether rejected. That there is a mystical meaning in some passages of Scripture cannot be denied.

(*a*.) Because Scripture itself declares that there is—in the history for instance of Sarah and Hagar, Gal. iv. 24. The "law" is expressly said to have had "a shadow of good things to come," Heb. x. 1. See also Rom. iv. 11; 1 Pet. iii. 21; Rev. xi. 8.

(*b*.) Because Scripture in the words, epithets, and phrases which it employs, frequently alludes to a tropical and emblematical meaning, and sometimes even exchanges the names of the things signifying and the things signified. Christ for instance is called David; the New Testament Church, Jerusalem and Zion; and heaven, paradise. Scripture abounds in such forms of speech.

(*c*.) Because, without the mystical meaning, some of the phrases employed in Scripture would be destitute of force. Of some things and persons it often speaks in terms too strong to be literally understood, such as those for example which the prophets use in regard to Jerusalem, and which are of so lofty a description that they

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must be understood as applicable to a nobler than the earthly city. The same thing holds true in regard to what is said of Melchisedec, Heb. vii.

(*d.*) Because in some passages the agreement between the type and the antetype is so clear that we cannot fail to mark it—between the Paschal Lamb, for instance, and Christ. This agreement certainly cannot be accidental or unknown to God and consequently it must have been ordained and designed by him.

But admitting that there is this mystical meaning, are we to search for it everywhere in Scripture?—and if not, where? and what are the marks or criteria by which it may be discovered? We do not hold with some that it is to be sought in every passage of Scripture. No reason can be given why it should, and without a reason it is inadmissible; for then an individual may put upon the language of Scripture any interpretation he pleases. We are not allowed, however, to do this, but only to bring to light such a meaning when it presents itself to our minds.

There must then be reasons in the text or in the connexion in which the passage stands to guide us in our investigation into the mystical sense. But no one has proved, no one can prove that sufficient reasons of this kind are to be found in every passage of Scripture. We put aside such a supposition therefore, and we do so all the more readily because those who have acted upon it have exposed themselves to ridicule by propounding the most absurd and erroneous interpretations. How then are we to discover the mystical or spiritual meaning?

It may be discovered, we reply, in four ways.

1. By attending to the things employed in way of representation. When these are of such a nature as to be fitted to denote something higher than what they properly and naturally mean, when they are singular, extraordinary, and apparently paradoxical, and when they call for more than ordinary consideration, we are warranted in seeking to discover in them a remote and recondite signification. We have instances of this in the history of Joseph and David.

(2.) By considering the nature of the things represented. When these are of paramount importance, and are such as deserve to be expressed by what was done or recorded at an earlier period, a mystical meaning may be looked for. Those of minor importance are not to be so treated, otherwise we will readily fall into error.

(3.) By attending to the agreement between a type and its antetype. When this is clear and presents itself readily and spontane-

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ously to the mind (many instances of which are to be found in the writings of Paul), when it is evident from other sources that the matter is of a typical nature, and when the things signifying and the things signified have the same name applied to them, in these and similar cases there is reason to think that a mystical meaning was intended.

(4.) By carefully weighing the reason which has led interpreters to assign such a meaning to certain portions of Scripture, the method which they adopted, and the marks which they observed in conducting their investigation. We do not mean that we are to confine ourselves in our search to those passages which have already engaged their attention. We are at liberty in the exercise of due caution and where strong reasons present themselves to seek for a spiritual signification in other parts of the word of God.

We have only to remark further in regard to the meaning of Scripture that one and the same figurative expression may signify different and even opposite spiritual things. Fire, for example, is a figurative representation of Christ, inasmuch as he illuminates and gladdens the soul and diffuses through it spiritual warmth; but as fire has also the power of consuming whatever is brought into immediate contact with it, it represents the persecutions to which the Church is exposed. In like manner the term *lion* is employed as descriptive both of Christ and of Satan. One and the same thing or person under the Old Testament dispensation may denote two things or persons under the New. Thus Elias was a figure both of John the Baptist who came in the power and spirit of that prophet, and of Christ inasmuch as he was translated to heaven. The land of Canaan also was a figure of the Church and of the celestial paradise.

2. In what way and by what means may the meaning of Scripture be ascertained? In answering this question, let us consider

(*a*) The means themselves.

(*b*) The manner in which they are to be used.

(*a*) The means are of various kinds and relate either to the general or to the more recondite meaning of Scripture. For the latter there is required continual reading and an acquaintance with the languages of the East. At present, however, we speak only of the means by which we may attain a general and saving knowledge of the word of God—means which we may use either individually or in conjunction with others.

The means which we use by ourselves are the reading of the word, comparing one part of it with another, attending to the connection

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and scope, and meditating upon the passage read in order to ascertain the mind of the Spirit and to make application of it to ourselves for the regulation of our affections, so that thereby we may become wise unto salvation, and be "thoroughly furnished unto all good works," 2 Tim. iii. 17. "Blessed is the man" whose "delight is in the law of the Lord, and in his law doth he meditate day and night," Ps. i. 1, 2; Ps. cxix. passim.

There are means also which we employ in conjunction with others, such as the hearing of the word, conferences conducted not in a contentious spirit which tends rather to obscure the meaning of the word, but in a spirit of love and for the purpose of mutual instruction and edification. Such conferences are calculated to be of signal benefit, and one hour so employed is frequently found to be more advantageous than six spent in solitary meditation. They are recommended to us in Scripture itself, Mal. iii. 16; Col. iii. 16.

There are other means, moreover, which have reference to God—prayer, namely, addressed to him that the eyes of our understanding may be enlightened to behold the wondrous things that are contained in his law, Ps. cxix. 18. For except in answer to prayer the Spirit will not be given to us, Luke xi. 13. And we cannot without the Spirit discern or receive the things of the Spirit of God, 1 Cor. ii. 14; we cannot understand the meaning of the word, and especially the truth that relates to salvation. Christ must open our eyes as he did those of his two disciples when on their way to Emmaus, Luke xxiv. 31.

(*b.*) In order to employ these means aright, our minds must be suitably disposed. If we would read and meditate on Scripture with advantage, we must come to it unshackled by prejudice, and not seeking in it only what is agreeable to our own taste or in harmony with our own preconceived opinions. We must ascertain all that relates to faith and duty with a mind unfettered by any human authority, and ready to bow with implicit deference to the authority of Scripture alone.

The student of the word of God must be characterized by modesty —not clinging pertinaciously to his own opinions, but ready to hear and to receive the statements of God himself who speaks in his word, and treating the word withal with the reverence which is due to it. He must engage in the study of it not to gratify his curiosity or to acquire reputation among men, but with the view of attaining the great end for which it has been given—the salvation of his soul. Timothy is commended because that from a child he had known the

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Holy Scriptures which are able to make a man wise unto salvation, 2 Tim. iii. 15. He is called blessed who meditates on the divine law day and night, Ps. i. 2. The Scriptures being given as the standard of saving faith, we must in using them keep this design constantly in view. They must be read, therefore, not indolently, superficially, or seldom, but diligently and often, and comparing Scripture with Scripture in conformity to the established rules of interpretation.

3. But how, it may be asked, can we be certain that we have discovered the real meaning of Scripture? In answering this question, we must

I. Destroy the false grounds on which this certainty has been made to rest.

II. Shew the only real foundation on which it should and can rest.

I. The false grounds are chiefly three:

(*a*) Ancient versions.

(*b*) The authority of the Fathers.

(*c*) The decrees of Popes and Councils.

(*a.*) The ancient versions are the Chaldaic, the Greek, and the Latin or the Vulgate. The Greek version, or the Septuagint, is said to have been written by seventy persons in the reign of Ptolemy Philadelphus, King of Egypt, and by the advice of Demetrius Phalareus, at a time when the Jews of Alexandria had begun to unlearn the Hebrew, their vernacular tongue, and to make use of the Greek. It is uncertain whether they translated all the books of the Old Testament or only the writings of Moses. It seems probable that this translation comprehended no more than the Pentateuch. About the time of the Maccabees, however, it appears that the Prophets with the Hagiographa were translated at the time when these began to be read in public. This version was reckoned of high authority by Christians in the first century and was very frequently employed even by the Apostles themselves. But after their time corruptions gradually crept into it, which led Origen in the third century to apply himself to correct it. Others, among whom was Lucianus, followed him in the same work. The editions of this version now extant spring from four sources—the Complutensian, forming part of the Polyglott, which was completed in 1517 at the expense of Cardinal Ximenes; the edition by Aldus Manutius in 1518; the Roman or Vatican; and the Codex Alexandrinus, which is now the best although it be somewhat rare. There are other Greek versions, which, if we were in possession of them, would be very valuable, such as those by

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Aquila of Pontus in the reign of Adrian; by Symmachus in the beginning of the third century; by Theodotion, which holds a middle place between the former two, being neither so literal as that of Aquila nor so paraphrastic as that of Symmachus; the version by Onkelos comprising the five books of Moses; and that by Jonathan Ben Uzziel, a disciple of Rabbi Hillel.* The Latin version, called the *Vulgate* or *Old Italic*, which abounded in errors, began to be corrected by Jerome. It soon acquired great authority among Papists and was declared authentic by a decree of the Council of Trent.†

Some prefer the Greek to the Hebrew version: the Romish church regards the Vulgate alone as authentic. In our opinion they are not to be implicitly relied on in the interpretation of Scripture.

1. Because we have the original text; and we need not repair for water to streams when we have access to the fountain. The case would be different if the original text were corrupted; but as it is in our possession entire, we are not called upon to regard as authoritative versions which however correct are not for a moment to be compared with it.

2. Because these versions labour under many defects. For (*a.*) in regard to the Septuagint, there is a frequent departure from the truth. The seventy were partly misled by the resemblance between some of the letters and by their ignorance of the language, they have sometimes designedly made corruptions, and, as is evident from their chronology of the patriarchs both before and after the flood, have accommodated themselves to the prejudices of the Jews so as to avoid giving them offence. Their ignorance of the language is seen especially in the Hagiographa, the versions of which are of little value. (*b.*) In regard to the Vulgate, even the wiser Papists themselves admit that it is full of errors. Not to mention other instances, there is the well-known corruption which has been made of the passage containing the first announcement of the Gospel, where the words, "it shall bruise thy head," are rendered so as to be applicable to the Virgin Mary—a rendering plainly absurd. It is certain besides that, through the carelessness of transcribers, many errors have crept into both versions, and therefore they frequently gave their attention to the

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* For information concerning these versions, see Horne's Introduction, vol. II.

† "Statuit et declarat, ut hæc ipsa vetus et vulgata editio, quæ longo tot sæculorum usu in ipsa ecclesia probata est, in publicis lectionibus, disputationibus, prædicationibus, et expositionibus pro authentica habeatur, et ut nemo illam rejicere quovis prætextu audeat ve præsumat."—*Canones. Concil Trid. Sess. IV.*

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correction of them. On this point see Amama in his *Antibarbarus Biblicus.**

(3.) Because the translators themselves of the Vulgate were unwilling to attribute such authority to the version. It is certain that Jerome made his version not under divine inspiration, but, as he states in his preface, in the exercise of ordinary industry. The seventy interpreters are said to have compared their versions together which is not the act of men inspired by the Holy Ghost.

(*b.*) Another false foundation on which the certainty that we have discovered the true sense of Scripture is made to rest is the authority of the Fathers, by whom Papists understood the writers of the fourth, fifth, and sixth centuries. On this point, however, they are not agreed. The expositions which these writers give of Scripture, not indeed of all passages, but of those on which several doctrines of faith depend, are regarded as a foundation and source. Some Lutherans even consider their judgment on controverted points if not as a primary yet as a secondary source; so that what the Fathers held passes for sound doctrine, and their expositions are viewed as a correct interpretation of Scripture in those passages to which we have referred.

For our part we do not despise the Fathers. Nay we admit the authority of their testimony in matters of faith at the time when they lived. We do not deny also, that much weight should be attached to what they say, when they treat of the Catholic faith received and transmitted by them. We approve of the reading of them, and may profitably consult them. Still we do not hold that their authority is infallible, but that they are always subject to Scripture itself. Nor would we, in explaining Scripture and in settling questions of faith, have too much deference paid to them and that for the following reasons.

(*a.*) Because they were not acquainted with the original language of the Old Testament and were liable to make mistakes in many passages. Some errors in consequence may have crept into their writings, as very many have done. Their authority, therefore, is not to be regarded as more valuable in matters of faith than that of other learned men who are equally fallible. They shew that they were

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* "Concludimus," says Amama in the work referred to above, "ad eum," the Hebrew text, namely, "examinandas esse omnes qua veteres qua recentes, nulla excepta, versiones;" and again, "Proinde nulla versio, qualiscunque ea sit, textui Hebraico æquari nedum præferri potest." Antibarb. Biblic. Lib. i. cap. 3, 4.

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ignorant of the original languages, if we except Augustine and Jerome who had a slight acquaintance with them.

(β.) Because the Fathers are inconsistent and sometimes contradictory in their testimonies; they frequently use ambiguous forms of expression and write in a style charged with allegory and hyperbole to a degree which renders it difficult if not impossible to gather anything from them.

(γ.) Because concerning questions of faith also which have reference to doctrines applicable to the church in all ages, they are sometimes deficient in investigation or knowledge, for they gave their attention for the most part to the controversies that were agitated among the heathen and heretics of their own times. They cannot therefore be interpreters of the whole of Scripture. Indeed every sect may find in their writings what favours their own views. They cannot therefore be regarded as a foundation on which the correct interpretation of Scripture should be made to rest.

(c.) The authority of councils and the decrees of Popes are another foundation on which it is alleged we should depend for ascertaining the true meaning of Scripture. We must therefore here determine whether there be in the church any external, visible, infallible, authoritative tribunal—any judge of controversies, whose decisions are binding upon the conscience. Papists maintain that there are. Protestants deny this, although some even of them seem to contradict themselves by frequently ascribing too much authority to the decrees of fallible men. Of these however we will not speak now but of the tribunal for which Papists contend. They say that there is a certain ecclesiastical tribunal, by which the true interpretation of Scripture is settled, and by which controversies in matters of faith are authoritatively and infallibly decided, so as to bind the conscience. But they do not agree as to what this tribunal is. For some, as the Papists properly so called, and all the Italians and Jesuits, maintain that the Pope alone is judge; while others, as the chiefs of the Gallican church, held that œcumenical synods were the judges, and that to them even the Popes themselves were subject.

We deny that there is any such tribunal by whose decisions we must abide and to which conscience must implicitly submit. And our reasons for doing so are these.

(a) We are not bound by Scripture to any such tribunal. For although it says that "there must be also heresies" in the Church, (1 Cor. xi. 19)—that there would be "false teachers" privily bringing in "damnable heresies," (2 Pet. ii. 1)—that "it must needs be that

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offences come," (Matt. xviii. 7), it nowhere speaks of a judge or tribunal in whose decisions we may safely acquiesce.

(β.) It not only does not do this, but it teaches the very contrary and binds us to itself as judge, "Search the Scriptures," John v. 39. The Bereans are commended because they searched the Scriptures and compared with them what the apostles preached, Acts xvii. 11. "Try the spirits whether they are of God," 1 John iv. 1. "Prove all things; hold fast that which is good," 1 Thess. v. 21. "Let every man be fully persuaded in his own mind," Rom. xiv. 5.

(γ.) Christ expressly declares that such a judge—authoritatively giving forth decisions—imposing an obligation upon the conscience—and dictating what we are to believe, has no place in his church. He says that we are to call no man master, and father, teacher, but that one is our father which is in heaven, that one is our teacher and master, even Christ, and that all others are brethren and disciples who have no authority over each other, Matt. xxiii. 8–10.

(δ.) This is further evident from the condition of believers and from the relation in which they stand to one another. It is not required that in this sense brother shall teach brother, for they all know God and are taught of him, Is. liv. 13; Jer. xxxi. 34; John vi. 45. They "have an unction from the Holy One, and know all things," they "need not that any man teach" them, 1 John ii. 20, 27. They are all members of the same body, (1 Cor. xii. 12) and therefore have no authority over one another.

(ε.) Scripture, besides, teaches us that there is only one judge, even Christ the Lord, before whom all must appear and to whom all believers must stand or fall, "Who art thou that judgest another man's servant? to his own master he standeth or falleth. Yea he shall be holden up; for God is able to make him stand," Rom. xiv. 4. "Every man's work shall be made manifest," 1 Cor. iii. 13.

(ξ.) We add further that we must have evidence that such a judge is permitted. But this cannot be proved. For Papists themselves are not agreed concerning the matter—some assigning this prerogative to the Pope and others to a council both proving by their refutation of each other that the prerogative belongs to neither Pope nor council. The Jesuits hold that councils are fallible without the authority of the Pope, while the Gallican Church on the contrary maintains that according to a decree of the Council of Constance*

* Held A. D. 1414. This Council declared by two decrees that the authority of the Roman pontiff was not greater than that of a general assembly of the church. John xxiii. who arrogated this supremacy was in the following year deposed from the Papal chair.

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the Roman pontiff is inferior and subject to a general assembly of the universal church. It is plain therefore, that neither Popes nor councils can be regarded as infallible guides in defining and settling controversies.

Not the Popes; for the great majority of them were men of the most profligate and abandoned character, of whom it would be ridiculous to suppose that they were endued with a spirit of infallibility. This is evident from the history of the church. Many of them also, as Honorius in the seventh century,* were condemned for holding heretical opinions.

Not councils or general assemblies; for they were composed of individuals who as such were liable to err, and who were equally liable in their collective capacity. A whole body cannot be infallible when its component parts taken singly are fallible. Experience, moreover, shows that councils can err as in the disputes which arose in the ninth century concerning image worship, in the course of which they not only opposed but condemned each other. There is no argument in short by which this claim to infallibility which Papists prefer for themselves can be established.

They quote in support of it indeed our Lord's language to Peter, "thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church," Matt. xvi. 18; *i. e.* upon Peter as a rock. Now the Popes they say are Peter's successors, and therefore the church is built also upon them. We answer, if this were said of Peter, it would be wrong to infer that it applied to the Popes who are not the successors of the apostle. Although they were so, they certainly have not inherited all his privileges for he was an apostle. But all the apostles were foundations of the church, Rev. xxi. 14; Eph. ii. 20, to which office Christ referred if he referred to the apostle at all. But it is not true that the apostle is spoken of in this passage as a foundation; for our Lord did not say "upon thee, Peter," but "upon this rock." He alluded therefore to the rock which Peter had just before mentioned "Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God"—this was the rock upon which the church was to be built. But they still urge that there must undoubtedly be some peculiar prerogative belonging to the apostle, and conveyed to him by Christ when he gave him this name. We do not deny that some prerogative was granted to him,

* The heresy which Honorius was charged with was that of the Monothelites, who held that there was *one will* in Christ. He was condemned by the sixth general council which met at Constantinople in the year 680.

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not however as being himself the rock on which the church was to be built, but as being the first who made known this rock to Jews and Gentiles. He was the first of the disciples who made the confession regarding the rock—the foundation on which the church rests, when he declared that Christ was the Son of the living God. By him he was called Peter, both because he thus made confession concerning the rock, and because he was the first to proclaim it to Jews and Gentiles—to the Jews on the day of Pentecost, Acts ii. 14–40, and to the Gentiles when he visited the household of Cornelius, Acts x. 34–48. This was the reason why he was now called Peter.

But, say Papists again, there must be some tribunal; for otherwise there will be no end to controversy. This holds in earthly kingdoms and societies which cannot exist without a judge. This we admit is indeed true in worldly kingdoms and in civil societies. They have their fundamental laws according to which judgment is pronounced and by which controversies are decided. But Christ's kingdom which is spiritual and consists in thorough conviction of mind is governed by a widely different rule. In such a spiritual society there can be no external judge. The conscience of every man alone pronounces judgment without prescribing to another the same standard of opinion and belief. Questions are decided according to the evidence presented to the mind. The rule is the word of God by which all things are to be tried—the judges are the consciences of men—and the supreme judge is Christ alone.

Papists maintain that there was such a tribunal under the Old Testament dispensation, that, when a dispute arose, the priest or judge then in office was appealed to, and that in his decision the parties were bound to acquiesce, Deut. xvii. 8–10. But, even if this were true, it would not follow that such a rule is to be observed now, because Christ's kingdom is altogether different from the ancient economy, inasmuch as it is not external but inward and spiritual which the kingdom of God under the Law was not. In controversies regarding matters of faith, besides, there was at that time no such tribunal. The disputes which were referred to the decision of the priest or the judge related only to religious observances or to matters of civil government. No mention is made of an external tribunal regarding points of doctrine. It is probable that there were various sects among the Jews, which however were allowed to hold their own peculiar opinions. Neither priests nor judges were invested with authority to decide and pronounce on these opinions. Even although the Urim and Thummim was a divine oracle, we do not read of matters of faith

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being definitively settled by its response. We conclude therefore that there is no such tribunal in the church.

Rejecting these foundations as false, let us now consider

II. The only real ground on which should rest the certainty of our having discovered the true sense of Scripture. In treating this subject we must advert to

(1.) The formal cause.
(2.) The instrumental cause.
(3.) The efficient cause.

(1.) The *formal* cause why we believe that we have ascertained the real meaning of Scripture is nothing else than a firm persuasion, in consistency with all the rules of interpretation. We must therefore speak

(*a*.) Of these rules.
(*β*.) Of the certainty which rests on them.

(*a*.) In addition to the use and meaning of the words of which we will not now treat there are three rules of interpretation.

First, The interpretation must agree with the connexion and scope of the passage and with the relation in which it stands to what goes before and to what follows. In this way we ascertain the mind of the author; because a phrase has frequently one meaning when taken generally and another when viewed in the particular connexion in which it stands.

Secondly, The interpretation must be agreeable to the analogy of faith, by which we understand not the opinions of any one sect, or the confession of faith of any religious body, (for such an analogy is only relative) but the general doctrines we meet with in Scripture—fundamental and saving truths. For it is not to be supposed that an author will contradict himself. If anything doubtful therefore is found in Scripture, it must be interpreted agreeably to the general doctrines —such as those concerning God and Christ and the way of salvation —to which doctrines there can be nothing contrary in any part of Scripture. No interpretation must run counter to these.

In the *third place*, the interpretation must not contradict our reason. It may be, indeed, that the truth or doctrine is above reason, and such that we have no adequate ideas of it. But there can be nothing in Scripture as we have already seen, directly repugnant to reason. Interpretation therefore must be tried by the standard of right reason. If it be agreeable to this standard, it may be received; if not, it is false.

(*β*.) A real and thorough conviction, in consistency with these

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rules of interpretation, is the only foundation or formal cause why we believe that we have ascertained the true sense of Scripture. Such a conviction leads us to acquiesce in the sense which we have found to be agreeable to these rules.

(2.) The *instrumental* cause is either man himself reading Scripture, meditating upon it, and comparing one part of it with another, or other teachers, whether singly or collectively, who enjoy more light than we do, and who direct us how to find out what Scripture really means. We must therefore advert here to the design and authority of councils. These are to be regarded by us as teachers, not as judges. They have no authority to bind the conscience, and authoritatively to compel us to receive any interpretation which they may choose to put upon the word of God. Their only province is to point out the way in which we may discover what the word says. Although the decrees of councils are not the rule of faith, they are still the rule of order, seeing that they define, yet not authoritatively, the formulas of confessions which ought to be adopted. The ends and designs of councils are these ;—to persuade themselves and others of the truths of Scripture and to procure for them the assent of all. If they cannot effect this, they ought to exercise mutual toleration, and make peace by public counsel, by preserving silence, by adopting a general rule of faith, or by any other course, with the view of settling controversies, and of allaying as much as possible the animosity of party. It is the province of councils, moreover, to assign limits to the external ecclesiastical community by general rules of faith and by forms of government; but they have no authority or power to dictate to men's consciences. They must only light the torch and thus shew the way to the right understanding of the truth. They are not to prescribe, they are not to command. They may prescribe limits, indeed, to those who disturb the ecclesiastical community, without however laying down a rule of faith, or assigning bounds to the church which extends farther than the external society. In this way councils may be of use; but great care should be taken that they be not abused, and that more be not attributed to them, as if they could bind the conscience, and as if their decisions were infallible and never to be called in question.

(3.) The *efficient* cause is the Holy Spirit who sheds his own light on our minds, that we may behold the wonders of the divine law, and who imparts to us a feeling of certainty regarding the truth that is necessary to salvation—not, be it observed, regarding all the meanings and all the passages of Scripture, but regarding those which

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have reference to matters of faith and to essential doctrines. Nor is it an enthusiastic but rational influence which he exerts; for he enlightens the understanding, purifies the judgment, and confirms us in the opinion which he leads us to form. This is what the apostle says, Rom. xiv. 4. See also Ps. cxix. 18; 1 John ii. 20.

But as the use of Scripture lies in its instructing man in regard to the way of salvation, he must not only look to it as the source of saving truths, but also order his walk and conversation agreeably to these truths; for the servant who knows his Lord's will and does it not shall be beaten with many stripes.

Having thus finished what we had to say concerning Scripture, we proceed to consider the system of doctrines as these are revealed in the written word. But before discussing the several parts of which the system is composed, we will present in brief compass a tabular view of the system itself and of the relation in which its parts stand to each other.

Whatever may be affirmed concerning God may be referred either to his *nature* or to his *works*.

I. His *nature* is considered either *abstractly* or in the *concrete*.
   A. *Abstractly*, when we treat of the names of his essence and of his attributes.
   B. In the *concrete*, when we regard him as subsisting in three persons—called the Trinity.

II. His *works* are *internal* and *external*.
   1. His *internal* work is his decree which is to be considered
      (*a*) *Generally*, in respect of its substance and form.
      (*b*) *Specially*, in respect of man's ultimate destiny, or *predestination*.
   2. His *external* works are *Creation* and *Providence*.
      Creation is to be viewed
      (*a*) *Generally*, in respect of its substance, cause, and form.
      (*β*) *Specially*, in respect of the higher orders of created beings, —*angels*, namely, and *men*.
      Providence also is
      (*a*) *General*, in respect of the preservation and government of the creatures.
      (*b*) *Special*, in respect of the different conditions in which man has been placed.

These *conditions* are three

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1. The condition of innocence in which the first man was placed.
2. The condition into which man brought himself when he fell. Here again we must speak
   (*a*) Of the fall itself and its accompanying circumstances.
   (*b*) Of the effect of the fall—or sin, which is viewed
      (.) *Abstractly*, or in its own nature.
      (..) *Concretely*, in relation to men, who are either
         (†) Our first parents, Adam and Eve, or
         (††) Their posterity—the whole human race.
3. The conditions into which he is introduced by deliverance from the effects of the fall. This condition is usually called the *economy* or *dispensation of grace*, and is considered

(*a*) In its *origin*—as the arrangement entered into between the Father and the Son in regard to the way in which sinners should be saved. This, in its turn, must also be viewed
   (.) In its *origin* or the will of the Father.
   (..) In its *completion*, or the consent of the Son with whom the Father made the covenant.

(*b*) In *its own nature*, which is likewise to be considered
   (*o*) In its *origin*, or the will of the Surety, the Son of God, in regard to the communication of the blessings of salvation according to the covenant of grace.
      This covenant must be explained
      1. In respect of its *conditions* which are
         (.) *Faith* with its several acts, and
         (..) *Repentance* which again is explained
            † In respect of its *nature*.
            †† In respect of its *origin* or as being the result of God's work in
               , Effectual calling and
               ,, Regeneration.
      2. In respect of its *benefits* which are
         a Justification.
         β Sanctification.
         γ Preservation.
         δ Glorification.
   (*oo*) In its *fulfilment* or in the consent of men.

As this covenant has been in existence since the fall, it has had different dispensations.
   1. A dispensation of *promise* in which we have either

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(*a*) The promise simply and by itself or

(*b*) The promise conjoined with the law and thence called the legal dispensation.

2. A dispensation under the Gospel which begins with the coming of Christ into the world and is thence called the *Evangelical* dispensation. This dispensation is to be viewed

(*a*) In its *foundation* which is threefold.

(.) That the Messiah has come and that Jesus Christ is he.

(..) That his life and actions were in every respect such as had been predicted regarding the Messiah. Under this head we must speak of his names, of the constitution of his person, of his offices, and of his twofold state of humiliation and exaltation.

(...) That the obedience and sufferings of Christ are to be regarded as a satisfaction rendered to divine justice.

(*b*.) In its own *nature* the Evangelical dispensation is viewed under the title of the Covenant of Grace or the New Covenant which implies the existence of two parties.

(.) The *superior* who proposes and seals the covenant by two sacraments, viz.,

† Baptism and

†† The Lord's Supper.

(..) The *inferior* or believers who are considered as gathered into one body and are called the Church.

We will now take up these parts in their order.

CHAPTER V.

GOD.

NAMES OF GOD—NAMES OF ESSENCE—PROPER NAMES—APPELLATIVES—ALEIM—JEHOVAH—EL-SHADAI—ADONAI—JAH—NATURE OF GOD—PERFECT—SPIRITUAL—THE INDEPENDENT CAUSE OF ALL THINGS—ATTRIBUTES OF GOD—ATTRIBUTES OF ESSENCE AND LIFE—SIMPLICITY OF GOD.

God, the object of Theology, is to be considered, as we have said, in the *abstract* and in the *concrete*.

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I. In the former we have to treat of his nature and essence, our knowledge of which is derived from the names of his essence and from his attributes. In this order we shall conduct our investigation.

A. A name is properly a certain characteristic sign, by which one person or thing is distinguished from others, and by which a distinct idea of the person or thing is produced in our minds. Such a sign is either

(*a.*) Real, or

(*b.*) Nominal, or notional.

(*a.*) A *real* sign consists of the attributes or distinctive characters of a person or thing. Hence we find *name* employed in Scripture for attributes. Thus in the Lord's prayer we say "Hallowed be thy *name*," Matt. vi. 9. David says "Give unto the Lord the glory due unto his *name*," Ps. xxix. 2. Jehovah says of his Angel, "my *name* is in him," Exod. xxiii. 21. Christ says in his intercessory prayer to the Father "I have manifested thy *name*," John xvii. 6.

(*b.*) A *nominal* sign generically speaking is that which serves to indicate an object, whether the sign be significative or that of persons and things, and has no proper force except by custom or use. Because in ancient times these signs were usually taken from attributes, they are also called notional signs, and because they awaken in the mind a distinct idea of the object to which they are applied, they are called names, as John, Paul, &c. And although, in themselves, they frequently have no meaning, yet, if by use they are attached to an object, they awaken in us the idea of that object and are its characteristic signs. It is in this latter sense we now understand the word—not as a real but a notional sign. Although God needs no signs of this sort, yet he has accommodated himself to us in this matter, in permitting such names or signs to be applied to him. These names are taken from his attributes and from the relations in which he condescends to stand to us, and are fitted to lead us to the knowledge of him. They are in Hebrew אלהים, יהוה, אל שדי, יה, אדנ; and in Greek Θεὸς and κύριος.

We begin with the former of these, and will consider them according as they are names of the divine essence, proper names, or appellatives; whether God himself assumed them, or whether they were given to him by men, as indications of their faith and hope.

(*a*) The name descriptive of the divine essence, whether that essence be considered in itself or in its relation to us, is אלהים. And it is a name of essence, because generally it suggests to our minds the idea of a Being infinitely perfect and so of the supreme God and

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of the divine nature. Like Θεὸς among the Greeks and *Deus* among the Latins, so אלהים among the Hebrews suggesting this idea is called a name of the divine essence.

This is evident from the use made of it in Scripture. We read in the Old Testament of a controversy between Elijah and the worshippers of Baal as to whether that divinity or Jehovah (אלהים) were the true God, 1 Kings xviii. 21, &c. The name therefore is one of essence, and is different from יהוה, which is a proper name. "The Egyptians are men and not God," (אלהים) Is. xxxi. 3. "Shew the things that are to come hereafter, that we may know that ye are gods," (אלהים) Is. xli. 23.

We shall here enquire—

(*a*) What the name means;

(*β*) Whether it may be given to any but God.

(*a*) In regard to the meaning of this name, it is

(.) Verbal.

(:) Real.

(.) By some it is derived from אלה with ה quiescent to *swear*, to *make a covenant with an oath*. But we object to this derivation; *first*, because ה in אלוה (for so it should be written in the singular number) is movable, and a derivative with ה movable cannot be formed from a root with ה quiescent; *secondly*, because it is opposed to the proper view of this name which is a name of essence, and must therefore in its signification denote something which suggests the idea of essence. But no such idea is suggested by *swearing* and *forming a covenant with an oath*. To form a covenant has no reference to the essence of God, (it is only *accidental*) much less to do so with an oath. He did so only once in the plains of Moab, Deut. xxviii.

The derivation of this name of the divine essence, therefore, from אלה to *curse* is far-fetched and improbable. It is more correctly traced to the root אלה with ה movable, which among the Arabs or Orientals signifies to *worship*, to *adore reverently*, and expresses an object lofty, sublime, perfect, to be regarded with feelings of profound awe. As this derivation agrees more properly with the essence of God, and brings that essence before our minds, we may the more readily adopt it. It answers to the Greek σέβασμα.

(:) The *real* meaning of this name (admitting the derivation given of it to be correct) embraces the essence of God considered

(*a*.) In the abstract.

(*b*.) In the concrete.

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(*c.*) In relation to ourselves.

(*a.*) If the essence of God be viewed *absolutely* or *abstractly*, this name denotes it; for it signifies a Being possessed of all perfection, exalted above all, and worthy of being reverenced and worshipped.

(*b.*) If that essence be considered *in the concrete*—as subsisting in three persons—the mystery of the Trinity is intimated to us by the name when it occurs in the plural (for it is sometimes found in the singular.)* From the frequent use of it in the plural we conclude that several persons partake of the divine essence—that that essence subsists in three persons or at least in more than one. No other reason can be assigned for its being used in the plural (especially as it has a singular form) but this, that it was intended thereby to indicate a plurality in the divine essence—a plurality which cannot be conceived except in respect to persons. For, if there were only one person, he could not have been called אלהים as we shall afterwards show.

(*c.*) But this name represents God and his essence subsisting in three persons in relation to ourselves, inasmuch as he is the object of our love, worship, and adoration, which the name denotes. Such is the import of the formula of the covenant, "I will be to thee a God," a formula very common in Scripture, and including every thing relating to our happiness which may be expected from an all-sufficient omnipotent God.

(*β.*) Is this name given to God alone, or to others beside him? Properly speaking it can be ascribed to none but God. This is evident from the explication which we have given. Referring as it does to the divine essence it cannot be applied to others, because they do not partake of that essence. It belongs, therefore, to God alone. Yet it has in some instances been given to others. By catachresis it has been attributed to objects which men have supposed to be possessed of the divine nature—to the idols, for instance, and false gods of the heathen, 1 Cor. viii. 5. It has been given also by a kind of accommodation to those in whom there has been conceived to be some faint resemblance to that which it denotes. As it signifies what is exalted, the person in whom there is found the appearance of this attribute, if he stand in a peculiar relation to God, receives this name in the way of accommodation and on account of this resemblance.

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* This was denied by Calvin, Drusius, Buxtorf, and others. They regarded the plural form of this word not as intimating or proving a plurality in the divine essence but as indicative of the dignity and perfection of God.

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In this sense angels are called אלהים, Ps. viii. 5, because they are, as it were, the sons of God, and represent him when they act as his messengers and ambassadors. In the same sense also supreme rulers among the Jews are called *gods* (אלהים), because they were the sons of God, and represented him in the power with which they were invested among men, and in the authority which they had to dispose of their lives, property, and liberty. This name, however, is not applicable to all magistrates indiscriminately, not even to the supreme magistrate. It is an abuse of the term, therefore, and indicates insufferable flattery to designate all kings and rulers gods or vicegerents of God. Such a use of it is unwarranted by Scripture and is unbecoming on the part of Christians. It was especially and exclusively applicable to the Jewish magistrate during the existence of the theocracy, and while the Judges were really representatives of God. It is not to be given to kings or other magistrates under the New Testament, for in its origin it would thus often suggest another idea than that of God.

Let us now consider the name that is peculiar to God. He does not indeed require such a name, because he is alone and has no equal nor fellow from whom by such a name to be distinguished. The idols were not God. Yet as the various divinities which were worshipped by the Heathen were distinguished by their peculiar names, God also, that he might accommodate himself to the genius of the Jews who were accustomed to the practices of the Heathen, assumed to himself a peculiar name, in order that he might be distinguished from the false gods, and be known and acknowledged as the God of Israel. That peculiar name is יהוה, JEHOVAH. Of this name, we will

I. Give an explanation.

II. Enquire into the origin.

I. Before entering upon the consideration of this name a question occurs as to its true reading—a question which has passed from philologists to divines, by whom it has been deemed of no little importance, as far as the origin and authority of the vowel points are concerned—and a question, besides, which is usually discussed in theological treatises, although, for our part, we do not think it of such magnitude as to call for very eager discussion. The question is, are the points which are found under the four Hebrew letters genuine, and do they belong to these letters? Or are they supposititious—belonging to the name ADONAI, and placed by the Masorites under the name JEHOVAH, thus reading ADONAI with the force of these points as often as the name JEHOVAH occurred? Fuller, Gataker, and Leus-

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den* contend for their genuineness ; while Buxtorf, Amama, Cappell, Drusius, Altingius, and others, hold that they are spurious and that they belong to the name ADONAI. For our part, we have no doubt whatever that they are spurious—that they belong not to the letters of JEHOVAH, but to the name ADONAI, and that they were placed by the Masorites under these letters, that they might not be read but as belonging to ADONAI. This originated in their superstitious reverence for the word Jehovah, under the influence of which they dared not pronounce it or utter it in public, but substituted for it, whenever it occurred, the word ADONAI. Our reasons for regarding these points as spurious are the following.

(*a.*) The points under the letters of JEHOVAH are not always the same, but are sometimes changed. Genuine points, however, under proper names, never undergo any alteration. Yet when the word JEHOVAH is conjoined with ADONAI, it is read not JEHOVAH but JEHOVI, and then takes its points from ALEIM ; lest, if it had the same points, it should be read ADONAI—thus proving that the points under the letters of JEHOVAH are not genuine.

(*b.*) The whole system of Masoretic punctuation clearly shows that these points were considered as belonging not to JEHOVAH but to ADONAI. In that system the letters of the word JEHOVAH are not taken into account at all but those of ADONAI ; and the authors of the system have pointed accordingly. This is evident from the fact that when any of the letters ב, ל, כ, מ, which are usually prefixed to words, are put before the name JEHOVAH, they are pointed not according to its letters but according to those of ADONAI. For example with ל, the letters of JEHOVAH are pointed like LAADONAI, which would not have been the case if the points under JEHOVAH had been genuine. In like manner the letter מ is prefixed to the name JEHOVAH according to the rule of the word ADONAI, and then we have the name pronounced not MIHOVAH but MEHOVAH, as if it began with א. Moreover the particle ל before words, the first letter of which is a consonant, admits a *dagesh* in that letter. It should also admit a *dagesh* in the first letter of JEHOVAH, which is a consonant. But it does not admit a *dagesh* in the first letter of words, if that letter be a vowel. Yet when it is prefixed to JEHOVAH, the ל has not what it should have, if the plan adopted in pointing JEHOVAH had been followed. The servile letters בגד כפת (Beghadh kephath) have *daghesh*

* See *Decas exercitationum philol. de pronunciatione nominis Jehovah, c. præf. Relandi*, Utrecht, 1707.

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lene in the middle of them when they follow a movable letter, as after ADONAI, the last letter of which is of this description. But they have not a *dagesh* when they follow a quiescent letter. After JEHOVAH, however, the last letter of which is quiescent, they have this point; thus plainly proving, that the points used under it are those of ADONAI. All the rules of Masoretic punctuation, therefore, shew that, in pointing JEHOVAH, the letters of that word were not taken into consideration, but those of Adonai.

(*c.*) All the ancients rendered the name JEHOVAH as if it should be read ADONAI. The Greek interpreters also and the writers of the New Testament have rendered it by κύριος. Origen, in his Hexapla, substituted in its place ADONAI. The Syriac version has MORIU, Lord; the Arabic, ALLAH or ALLALAH.

(*d.*) The ancients did not pronounce the word JEHOVAH according to the points, but, according to Sanchoniathon,* Ἰευω, or, according to Diodorus Siculus,† JAO. Macrobius,‡ also, has Ἰαω. The Samaritans, according to Theodoret,§ read it Ἰαβέ.

(*e.*) The letters do not bear these points. For the word is derived from the root היה or הוה, and יהוה is the third person singular of the future of which the first person (אהיה *ero*) occurs in Exod. iii. 14. It is thus sufficiently evident that the true reading of this word should be JEHOE. But it is the same in which of these ways it be pronounced, provided the letters and their signification be carefully attended to.

The explanation of this name is

1. Verbal
2. Real.

1. In regard to the former, the following things must be observed.

(*a.*) That the word יהוה is the third person of the future and should be rendered by *erit, he will be;* not, by *est, he is,* as some say, who hold that י is redundant and merely the formative of the proper name, and who refer this name to his essence and his natural and necessary being. It is not probable that in a name so sacred any letter is *otiant,* the less so, because the future form אהיה occurs in Exod. iii. 14. Hence it is evident that יהוה should be rendered by the third person of the future, *erit, he will be.* It cannot be said

* Phœnician history translated from the first book of Eusebius, &c. *Lond.* 1720.

† Diodori Siculi bibliotheca. ed. Wesselingii, *Amstelod.* 1746. 2 vol. in fol.

‡ Aur-Theod. Macrobii expositio in somnium Scipionis; et saturnaliorum, lib. vii. *Venetiis, opera et impensa Nic. Jenson,* 1472, *in fol.*

§ Theodoreti (B.), episc. Cyri, opera omnia, *Halæ* 1769–74. 5 *tom. in* 10 *vol. in* 8vo.

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that this name was unknown to the ancients. God himself revealed it to them, Exod. vi. 3. By the patriarchs he was known as God Almighty, as a self-existent and necessary Being. The circumstances, besides, in which God made himself known by this name (Jehovah) required that it should be such as would show that he was about to fulfil the promises made to the fathers, and not such as pointed to his necessary existence. As he was now about to deliver his ancient people from Egyptian bondage, God assumed this name in order to assure them of this deliverance, agreeably to the promises made to the fathers.

(*b.*) That the name does not refer to any of the essential attributes of God nor to his existence as such. Neither can it be understood as referring to his existence in time to come or to his eternity, as the Gallic version would have it; thus making *erit he will be* the same as *he will always be.* This opinion is refuted by the arguments already adduced. God was known by the patriarchs as an eternal Being and it could serve no purpose now to reveal himself as such. The name therefore must have reference to the promises made to the fathers and now about to be fulfilled.

2. This therefore is what we call the *real* explanation of the name. It is the same as he will *manifest* or *perform.* This is evident from the title which he takes to himself אהיה אשר אהיה *ero qui ero*, I will prove that I am what I should be. As therefore in speaking of himself he says *ero qui ero*, this means nothing else than that he would be what he had promised he would be and what by his promise he was bound to be. This name therefore takes for granted that God had given promises by which he bound himself to the Israelitish church. It directly implies, moreover, that he is faithful in fulfilling his promises and thus brings this attribute vividly before our minds. As these promises finally relate to the subjugation of his enemies and to the deliverance of his people, there is in their fulfilment a conspicuous display of his perfections. And hence it is that the names embraces these perfections and represents God as faithful and merciful, righteous and holy. All this is strongly confirmed both by the use of the name which denotes those perfections that are manifested in accomplishing his promises, and also by that passage in which God, when about to reveal himself to Moses and to declare his name, said "Jehovah, Jehovah," and enumerated attributes of a twofold kind, his justice, namely, and his mercy; (Exod. xxxiv. 6, 7)—thus proving that the name refers to these perfections.

II. Let us now enquire into the origin and full import of this

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name. According to Moses, it proceeded from God himself. When he enquired what his name was, he received for answer, "I am that I am," Exod. iii. 14. Nor can it be given to any but God; because it is a proper name—a name by which he is distinguished from idols—a name which served as a sacramental and memorial name—such a name as God himself alone ought to have taken. Nor could he receive it from any other; for no man can give such a sacramental name.

But if this be true, as it really is, a difficult question arises, whether this name was not known and employed before the time of Moses. On this question philologists and divines are not agreed;—some maintaining that it first came into use about his time, but unable to assign the precise date.

In our opinion it was not known before the days of Moses—God did not employ it as a sign or memorial of himself. And our reasons are these.

(*a.*) We read not only that God did not appropriate the name to himself in this sense, but that he did the very contrary, Exod. iii. 14. —*i.e.* he assumed it in the time of Moses. And what are we to infer from this fact but that he previously was not known by it?

(*b.*) The language which God uses in Exod. vi. 3, still further confirms this. In that passage he says that he revealed himself to the patriarchs by the name EL-SHADAI, but that he was not known by the name JEHOVAH. This certainly cannot be understood of the import of the name but of the name itself, as may be seen by comparing it with the name SHADAI. "I am," he said to Abraham, "the Almighty God," EL-SHADAI, Gen. xvii. 1. The reason why he now called himself JEHOVAH was, that, as he had given promise to the patriarchs which were to be fulfilled to their posterity, he now wished to take this name in order to intimate his determination to implement his engagements. Nor can we admit the opinion of those who understand the passage (Exod. vi. 3) interrogatively and translate it "by my name Jehovah was I not known to them?" This is a very uncommon usage and obviously does not apply in this case, because the name Jehovah is contrasted with the name El-Shadai. If the words are understood as implying a negative statement, there is no difficulty in the passage; whereas, if they be considered in the light of an interrogation, it is not easy to know what they mean.

(*c.*) The name Jehovah was not assumed by God before he set apart the people of Israel to himself and led them forth out of Egypt, because it is peculiar to him as Israel's God. He therefore made

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himself known by it at the period of their deliverance, because at that time he stood in a peculiar relation to them. Formerly he occupied, as the Lord of heaven and of earth, the same relation to all, Gen. xiv. 19, 22;—he was not the God of any peculiar people. He could not therefore be called Jehovah before the separation of the Israelites was effected.

(*d.*) It is plain from the book of Genesis, that this name is not found where it should be, if it had been known. For in what part of it does he present himself by this name as the God of any particular person or people? In the forms of benedictions and oaths in which the name Jehovah, if it existed, should have been used, he is not in any instance so called.

The name does not occur in the formulas of benedictions. "I am thy exceeding great reward," Gen. xv. 1. "I am the Almighty God," EL SHADAI, Gen. xvii. 1. Jacob invoked a blessing upon the sons of Joseph from "God before whom" his "fathers Abraham and Isaac did walk," Gen. xlviii. 16. He is called also "the most high God, possessor of heaven and earth," in whose name Melchizedec blessed Abraham, Gen. xiv. 19.

Neither does it occur in the formula of oaths. "Jehovah" or "the Lord liveth" was not at that time in use as it was afterwards. Men sware only by God as the creator and judge of heaven and of earth, Gen. xiv. 22; xxiv. 3. We conclude, therefore, that this name was not then revealed or at least was not used as it was in the time of Moses.

It may be objected that the name Jehovah is found in Gen. ii. 4; iv. 1; and elsewhere in the same book. This however is by *prolepsis* or anticipation, a figure common to all historical writers, who, for the sake of perspicuity, usually employ, in narrating past events, phrases and names known in their own times. Still however it does not occur in these passages as a proper name, not as a commemorative or sacramental designation, but as an appellative. Moses had a peculiar reason for calling the Lord of heaven and earth at that time by the name Jehovah—to shew the Israelites, namely, that he who now revealed himself as JEHOVAH was known to their fathers as the creator and judge of heaven and earth. We have several instances of this mode of writing in Scripture. "Then began man to call upon the name of the Lord" (JEHOVAH) Gen. iv. 26. Yet those who did so are called not "sons of JEHOVAH" but "sons of God" (ALEIM) Gen. vi. 2. Thus also the son of Hagar is called Ishmael, because the Lord had heard her affliction, yet the word JEHOVAH does not

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enter into the composition of his name, Gen. xvi. 11. But we leave the student to mark more instances in the course of his investigations. We have adduced a sufficient number to warrant the inference that the name JEHOVAH was first revealed to Moses.

In regard to the real meaning of this name, we remark that it is

(*a.*) A *proper* name.

(*b.*) A *sacramental* name.

(*a.*) It is the *proper* and incommunicable name of God. It has all the characteristics of a proper name. For in the *first* place, it does not admit of suffixes; ה is not demonstrative, nor does the word occur in the *status constructus*. He is called indeed "JEHOVAH TSEBAOTH," the Lord of Sabaoth, but this is an elliptical name which is elsewhere fully rendered the "Lord God of Hosts," Hos. xii. 5. In the *second* place, God took this name to himself as his memorial, Exod. iii. 15; Hos. xii. 5; and thus declared that it would be perpetual. In the *third* place, God expressly says that he will not give his name to another, Is. xlii. 8.

It is objected by some that in the controversy regarding the divinity of Christ the Angel of God is called JEHOVAH, whom notwithstanding they deny to be a partaker of true divinity. Our reply to this objection is that we look upon that Angel as the true God, because God himself says, "my name is in him," Exod. xxiii. 21.

It is further objected that the name is given to the Ark. Moses said when it set forward, "Rise up Lord," and when it rested, "Return, O Lord," Numb. x. 35, 36. But it is very obvious that this language is used not of JEHOVAH but of JEHOVAH in reference to the Ark and of the Ark in reference to JEHOVAH. Inasmuch as God rested upon it and sat upon it between the cherubims, he may be said to have moved when it was moved and to have rested when it rested.

It is objected, again, that an altar is called by this name. Thus Moses after the defeat of Amalek reared an altar and called it JEHOVAH NISSI—*the Lord my banner*, Exod. xvii. 15. Of Jerusalem also it is said "the name of the city from *that* day *shall be—the Lord is there*," JEHOVAH SHAMMAH, Ezek. xlviii. 35. But nothing more is meant by this application of the name JEHOVAH, than that the altar and Jerusalem were symbols of the divine presence, not as if they were JEHOVAH but that JEHOVAH was there.

(*b.*) But it is also a *sacramental* name, *i. e.* it is a sign and seal of the faithfulness of God in fulfilling his promise—a pledge by which he conveys to believers the assurance that he will accomplish all that

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he has spoken concerning them. And to this name they may appeal and be confirmed by it in their faith and hope. Hence we find David saying, "*When thou saidst*, Seek ye my face; my heart said unto thee, Thy face, Lord, will I seek. Hide not thy face far from me," Ps. xxvii. 8, 9. With this view also God took this name to himself, that he might assure the Israelites that he would fulfil the promises which he had made to their fathers.

In addition to the names of essence and the proper name JEHOVAH, there are those which are usually called *appellatives*, whether by these God revealed himself or men made a declaration by them of their faith and hope in him. These names are אלשדי, אדני, יהה.

אלשדי, one of the names of God, was principally in use before the time of Moses, and was that by which he manifested himself to the patriarchs, Exod. vi. 3. We find him calling himself by this name, Gen. xvii. 1. And it is exceedingly well fitted to represent him to us as an almighty, all-sufficient Being, as he shews himself to be in creating, preserving, and renewing the world. אל is derived from איל, *strength, force*, and hence denotes a Being endued with the power of acting, not with ability merely but with an exceeding measure of strength. God is presented to us as such a Being in creating the world, and in redeeming it by his Son Jesus Christ; inasmuch as he has delivered man from the power of the law and of sin by his own omnipotent arm. The Son of God is called "the mighty God" (אל) Is. ix. 6. The other part of the name is שדי from שדד *to lay waste*, and represents God as taking vengeance on impenitent sinners. To this allusion seems to be made in Is. xiii. 6. Or more probably it is from the *pihel* form of the verb שדה. But then how do we account for the dagesh in ד? We reply that derivative nouns which have the same origin and power increase the signification of the primary word. The root שדה signifies *to be well watered* and in the *pihel* form denotes *to be every where well watered—watering all things* with a very plentiful stream. This is very applicable to God as an all-sufficient Being, inasmuch as he possesses all that is necessary to make man perfectly happy. As such he is presented to us in Scripture—as such he has manifested himself in his works of nature and of grace—and as such he is seen in the covenant into which he entered with Abraham, Gen. xvii. 1.

אֲדֹנָי. If this name be pointed with *Qamets* (ָ) under the last syllable, it means the only true God, with allusion to the name JEHOVAH. When it is pointed with *Pattahh* (ַ) it also signifies the LORD. It comes from אדן, which again is from אד, signifying a

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foundation or basis, and thus means that God is LORD by just title. He is not so called because, as some suppose, he is the basis and foundation of all things, for this is not applicable to Lordship as such, but because he is Lord upon just ground and by unquestionable right. It is on this that Lordship properly rests. And, inasmuch as by creation God has such a righteous and lawful claim, he is said to possess heaven and earth, Gen. xiv. 19, 22. He is therefore called LORD because by creation we are his and he claims us as his own. He is LORD, moreover, in respect of his work of redemption, in which he has made us peculiarly his own by delivering us from the bondage and dominion of sin. Hence Christ is called by way of eminence the Lord because he has purchased the Church with his own blood, Acts xx. 28.

יה. This name is derived, in all probability, from יאה, signifying *it becometh*, and hence denotes the beauty, order, and harmony, by which all things are characterized. By this name God is presented to us as a Being possessed of supreme excellence and beauty, and invested with attributes which, though they may seem to be opposed to each other, as his justice, for instance, and mercy, nevertheless meet together in harmonious combination. Some are of opinion that this name is a contraction of JEHOVAH. But this is very improbable. The Hebrews were not in the habit of contracting the divine names. The shortness of the word Jehovah, which consists only of four letters, does not render it necessary that it should be contracted. Such a process, besides, is usually resorted to only in the case of words which are very frequently used. But יה occurs very rarely, while יהוה is found in almost every part of the Old Testament. If it were a contraction of this name, then the two would not be found together: yet they are sometimes so found. Once indeed we meet with the reduplication of the name JEHOVAH, Exod. xxxiv. 6. But it is used in that passage for a peculiar reason, namely to bring prominently before our notice two of the divine attributes—the justice and mercy of God.

It is unnecessary to enter upon an explanation of the Greek names. They are sufficiently known almost to all, but they render us little assistance in attaining a knowledge of the nature of God. We may only state that *κύριος* corresponds to JEHOVAH or ADONAI, and *Θεὸς*, to ALEIM.

We come now to speak of the *essence* of God, by which, properly so called, we understand that from which all his attributes may be derived and into which they should all be resolved. In Scripture it

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is called τὸ Θεῖον, Acts xvii. 29; θειότης, Rom. i. 20; ἡ θεότης, Col. ii. 9. It is also called φύσις, the nature of God; as when the Gentiles are said to worship those "which *by nature* (φύσει) are no gods," Gal. iv. 8.

Let us now enquire, as far as we are able, what the nature of God is. Of this nature we have no clear nor adequate conception; yet we have a certain idea which we shall endeavour to bring out in the following propositions.

Our *first* proposition is, *God is an infinitely perfect Being; so that, whatever the nature of any being is, it is yet certain in regard to him that one more excellent cannot be conceived.* To suppose that there is, is to deny that he is God. The very idea of God implies that there is none superior to him. To call him a perfect Being or God amounts to the same thing. When we ascribe perfection to him, we mean not relative but absolute perfection. We call that being infinitely perfect who has every perfection which belongs to his nature. And God is such a being.

Our *second* proposition is, *As all existing things are either substances or modes of being, we call God an infinitely perfect Being in substance not in mode.* A substance is that which exists apart by itself as a subject; whereas a mode has no separate subsistence, but depends on the subject to which it belongs. That God is a Being in the former sense is plain from our first proposition: namely, that he is infinitely perfect. But it is more excellent to exist as a substance than as a mode; for a mode has no existence by itself—it exists in a subject and therefore has a dependent existence. And as it depends for existence on a substance and is posterior to the subject, it is imperfect. God, therefore, being perfect, must exist as a substance.

Our *third* proposition is, *As all the substances with which we are acquainted are either material or immaterial, God must belong to the one class or the other, and not, as some philosophers both ancient and modern have maintained, to a description of being of which we know nothing.* There is no reason for the latter opinion. But a reason should be given for it. And a reason there would be if some of the divine attributes were such as we know could not be referred either to a material or spiritual substance. We know no such attributes, however, and therefore the opinion that the divine nature is of an unknown description is altogether without foundation. For, although we have not a perfect idea of God, we know this much, that in essence he is spiritual and immaterial.

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Our *fourth* proposition is, *God is a spiritual not a material being—he is a substance endued with thought, understanding, and will.* He is, therefore, an immaterial substance and not a body; because a body has not, in itself, the power of acting, and has length, breadth, and thickness. The grounds on which this proposition rests are these.

(*a.*) God is a perfect being. But a spiritual being is of a higher order than one that is material. For a spirit acts of itself by the force of an internal principle, resolves to act in a certain way, and is conscious of its actions. None of these things, however, can be predicated of a body. It does not act unless moved from without; it has no power in itself of acting; it is not conscious of its actions. As a spiritual substance, therefore, far excels one that is material, and as God is a perfect being, he must be regarded as belonging to the former and not to the latter.

(*b.*) Effects bear testimony regarding the nature of their cause. Now those which proceed from God are such as can in no way be produced by a material substance. For among them there are spiritual beings such as our own souls, which are endued with thought and liberty. In these effects, moreover, we perceive harmony, order, and mutual relation. But these cannot be the effect of a material cause, for then the effects would far exceed the cause that produced them. We conclude, therefore, that they are the product of wisdom, power, and liberty—perfections which belong to a spirit and not to a body.

(*c.*) Conscience represents God to us as the witness and judge of our actions, and therefore as a spiritual and not a material being.

(*d.*) Scripture confirms this. It declares that "God is a Spirit," John iv. 24; Acts xvii. 25—and that he is "the Father of spirits," Heb. xii. 9.

Our *fifth* proposition is, *God is a being purely spiritual, without any admixture of what is material.* We are composed of mind and body. But this is not the case with God. In him there is nothing corporeal, as the Anthropomorphites maintained who ascribed to him an ethereal bodily form. Our reasons for saying so are these.

(*a.*) A body labours under many imperfections, does not act of itself by a free power of its own, and is unconscious of its actions. But in God there is no imperfection, and therefore he is not a body.

(*b.*) If God have a body, it must be either created or uncreated. To say that it is uncreated is to say what is contrary to the very nature of a body, for then it would be self-existent. But a body is made up of parts and is resolvable into parts, and has no power in itself of

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existing necessarily. Neither can God have a created body; because then there would be something in him which is not eternal. But as he is absolutely eternal, he cannot have such a body—he is purely immaterial. The passages of Scripture in which corporeal parts are ascribed and from which the Anthropomorphites reasoned, must be understood θεοπρεπῶς, or agreeably to the divine nature. This we shall shew when we treat of the affections of God.

Our *sixth* proposition is, *God is not only a substance spiritual, possessed of every perfection, and without any mixture of what is material, but he is also distinct from created things, in such a sense that he is the free independent producing cause of them all.* This proposition is opposed principally by those who hold that God and the universe are one and the same being, existing and acting by an invincible necessity. Such was the opinion of Spinoza,* who maintained that the Deity was a substance endowed with infinite attributes, only two of which are known to us,—thought, namely, and extension —that all spiritual and corporeal existences are modifications of these attributes, and that the Deity exists in these modifications. The idea which he formed of God was only that of a being subject to these modifications. He acknowledged no Being distinct from the universe as its free cause. He said that such a cause does not exist except in the modifications of the attributes of thought and extension, that existing objects, taken together, form God, and that he is only an abstract idea, having no existence except in the human mind.

This system admits of easy refutation, if we consider that God is an immaterial Being, removed to an infinite distance from every thing that is corporeal, and that, as we have already seen, he is the free cause of all things. But this refutation belongs particularly to the department of Natural Theology.

To sum up all that has been said, a spiritual substance is distinct from every thing that is corporeal and created and is infinitely perfect. Such a substance we hold God to be. He possesses a perfect nature from which all his attributes must be derived.

We now proceed to the consideration of the divine *attributes*. By

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* Benedict Spinoza was a Portuguese Jew and lived in the 17th century. In his *Ethics*—a work published after his death—he distinctly avows his atheistical principles, which, in his *Tractatus Theologico-Politicus* published during his lifetime, he seems to have suppressed. It would seem from the manner in which he uniformly spoke on religious subjects and from the letters which he wrote, that he was fully aware of the pernicious tendency of the principles which he held. This may account for the suppression referred to.

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these we mean nothing else than the names of the divine nature considered in its various aspects, or the definitions of God which have already been given. These attributes receive different names in Scripture. They are called the *name* of God, the *glory* of God, the *goodness* of God, and by other designations which we shall explain in the proper place. Now as they are the names or definitions of the divine nature, viewed in its different aspects, we must bear in mind what that nature is of which we have just given an explanation—that God, namely, is a substance and a spiritual substance, from which spontaneously flow all those attributes which belong to him as such. Hence arises a distinction of the divine attributes into those of *substance* and *spirituality*, or of *essence* and *life*.

By some they are divided into *communicable* and *incommunicable*; by the latter of which are meant those—such as his self-existence—of which not even the least resemblance is to be found in the creature; while by the former are understood those which belong to God as a Spirit and to which there is something analogous in the creatures. But this is not a good distinction; because, properly speaking, none of the attributes of God can be really communicated. The creature may have something resembling them, but the attributes themselves it has not. We prefer, therefore, the distinction which we have already given of them, into those, namely, of *substance* and *spirituality* or of *essence* and *life*, and agreeably to this distinction we will now proceed with our explanation.

Before doing so, however, our way must be prepared, lest we stumble at the very outset by erroneously supposing that there are so many parts, or that there is some composition in God, from the circumstance of his attributes being several and distinct; whereas, in fact, they are divided only according to our mode of conceiving them, because on account of the weakness of our mind we cannot in any other way form an idea of him. In order to avoid this error, therefore, we premise a certain general property of the divine nature viz. its *simplicity* or freedom from all composition of parts.

When we ascribe this property to God, we mean that he possesses all his attributes as qualities of his nature, and that these attributes are inseparable from himself. This property has a *positive* and *negative* meaning which we shall

I. Explain and then

II. Prove.

I. In a *positive* sense this property denotes that all the attributes of God are essential to his nature, so that they are identified with it:

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and though, as we said, they are various according to the aspect in which they are viewed, they are nevertheless in manner and degree immutable as his nature itself. They are, moreover, so connected, that one involves, is inseparable from, and draws along with it the others. Not that one is another, for the ideas we form of them are different, but that one requires another, and that all are linked together by an inseparable bond. God, therefore in a positive sense, is a simple uncompounded Being, inasmuch as his attributes are always the same and cannot be dissociated from one another.

In a *negative* sense this property consists in God's entire exemption from every kind of composition. Now composition is usually distinguished into

1. *Physical* and
2. *Metaphysical.*

1. *Physical* composition, according to philosophers, is of three kinds.

(*α.*) There is a composition of *parts essentially different.* Man, for instance, is composed of soul and body—substances entirely differing from each other in their nature. Such, however, as is evident from what we have already said, cannot apply to God whom we have proved to be a pure Spirit.

(*β.*) There is a composition of *parts really but not essentially different,* such as may be affirmed of the human body. This kind of composition can be predicated only of what is material. But as there is no admixture in God of what is material, it is plain that this composition does not belong to him.

(*γ.*) There is a composition of *subject and accident.* By accident we mean that which is added to a being from some extrinsic source and makes it complete, and which therefore does not belong essentially to the nature of the subject. It is evident that this cannot apply to God who is infinitely perfect. For there can be in him nothing which he himself is not—nothing added to him from any other source—and which can make him perfect. It is to be observed, however, that free actions are not to be reckoned among accidental properties. Between these there is a very wide difference. The former are such as a being performs of himself and in the exercise of his own powers. Yet they do not serve to make him what he is, for he remains the same whether he perform them or not; and although he may exist without them still they do not belong to the class of accidents. From this it is plain that the decrees of God are improperly accounted as such, and should justly be regarded as free actions. The vine nature may be without them. God may have existed in

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their absence. This composition, then, of subject and accident, must not be regarded as including free actions, but as referring to properties which are added to a being from some other quarter, and which make him what he is.

2. *Metaphysical* or imaginary and abstract compositions are those which exist only in the mind. They are called also ideal and are of three kinds.

(α.) There is the composition of *essence* and *existence*, found in those beings whose essence is distinctly understood apart from their existence. It is applicable to those whose essence is different from their existence, and in regard to whom the idea of the former does not of necessity involve that of the latter. I may form the idea of a man, without necessarily concluding that a man exists, because his essence does not of necessity involve his existence. The latter is contingent merely. Such a composition as this, however, we deny in regard to God, because the idea which we form of him implies his necessary existence, inasmuch as such existence belongs to the nature of a perfect being.

(β.) There is the composition of *genus* and *species*. By the former we mean that which is common to several individuals; by the latter, that which distinguishes the individuals from one another. Humanity, for instance, is a generic term, because all men partake of it; but every man has his own specific difference, by which, as an individual, he is distinguished from all others. But neither can this composition be predicated of God. Divinity is not a genus, and the distinction of persons the species; for, as we shall afterwards shew, God is one.

(γ.) There is the *composition of acting* and the *power to act*—power, let it be observed, which is not natural but acquired, and which the individual who has acquired it may put forth in action at his own pleasure; otherwise, if natural power be meant, there will be no such composition. But this natural power belongs to God. Yet though he has it he may not put it forth into action. For he is omnipotent—he may do more than he does, and he has power therefore, distinct from the exercise of that power. If he had not, then his power would be exhausted by acting. His power therefore does not imply composition. But if acquired power be meant, composition follows. A man, for example, has many acquired powers, such as those of writing, walking, &c., which he either puts forth into action or not. But this composition and this power cannot apply to God, because whatever God has is founded in his natural power and flows

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from the perfections of which he is possessed. Such seems to us a right view of the simplicity of the divine nature—a simplicity consisting in an entire exemption from everything material or bodily.

II. The proof of this simplicity is easy whether we consider its negative and positive meaning, or examine the Word of God itself.

(*a.*) If we attend to the negative meaning of the term, there can certainly be no composition in God, because he is an independent and perfect Being. But that which is compounded is not so; because it is dependent upon the parts of which it consists and is resolvable into these parts; and this implies imperfection.

(*β.*) The same thing may easily be shewn from the positive meaning of the word. That which is perfect can have nothing but what belongs to its nature. Its perfection can be neither increased nor diminished. It must always possess its attributes, therefore, in the same condition and in the same degree. If even one of his attributes were wanting God would not be perfect. And hence it is evident that they all belong to his essence and are inseparably linked together.

This simplicity is proved also by Scripture. There his essence is, as it were, identified with his attributes. "God is *love*," 1 John iv. 8. "God hath spoken in his *holiness*," Ps. cviii. 7. "The Lord God hath sworn by his *holiness*," Amos iv. 2. This is also intimated to us when he is called "*light*," John i. 5;—and "*fire*," Is. x. 17. He is said, likewise, to be *eternal*, Deut. xxxiii. 27. An *immortal life* is ascribed to him, 1 Tim. i. 17;—and an *endless life*, Heb. vii. 16.

CHAPTER VI.

ATTRIBUTES OF GOD.

INDEPENDENCE—ETERNITY—IMMUTABILITY—UNDERSTANDING—GOD'S KNOWLEDGE, ITS OBJECT, EXTENT, AND MANNER—GOD'S WILL, ITS OBJECT, ACTS, AND PERFECTION.

We now proceed to the consideration of the divine attributes according to the division already observed, *i. e.* as attributes of the nature of God, considered

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I. As a substance and

II. As a spiritual perfect substance.

I. If God be considered as a substance, that substance may be viewed in reference to its origin and end, to its duration, and to the condition and manner of its existence. In other words regarding a substance as such three enquiries present themselves—whence and why it is—when it began to exist and when it will cease to be—and in what manner it subsists. Hence arise the three attributes of God viewed as a substance, namely,

(*a.*) His independence,

(*b.*) His eternity,

(*c.*) His immutability.

(*a.*) When we say that God is independent, we mean that he does not owe his existence to any *efficient* or *final* cause extrinsic to himself. We are designed by another cause to a certain end, and in regard to every existing object, we may ask whence and why it is—by what cause and for what purpose it has been produced. To this question in reference to God, we reply, that God exists of himself and for himself, and therefore independently of an efficient and final cause.

In respect of an *efficient* cause he is said to have his being from himself. Hence this attribute is called *aseitas*, which means nothing else than this, that he exists by virtue of his own nature and without any external cause. It has a *positive* and *negative* meaning. In the latter sense every efficient cause extrinsic to God is excluded, and thus he differs from all other beings who have their origin and efficient cause without themselves. In the former sense, God is the cause of himself and has his existence in himself. We do not mean that he is, in the ordinary acceptation of the phrase, the producing cause of himself. This would involve a manifest contradiction; for it would represent him as at once the producer and the Being produced. But he could not be before he was produced. He would, in this case, at once be and not be the same being—he would be the producing cause and yet not be that cause, inasmuch as he was produced. God, therefore, is not from himself as being the efficient cause of himself in this sense, but as existing by virtue of his own perfect nature; so that the reason of his existence is in his own nature. But what is it, it may be asked, to exist in this way? We answer that we have no idea of it, and can more easily say what God is not than what he is. Our ideas are formed from the manner of our own existence. Depending for our being on a cause without

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ourselves we cannot conceive how a being can exist from himself. Reason, however, clearly teaches us that God is such a Being. *First*, because he is a perfect Being, to whom none can be conceived superior. But a being produced by another cause is inferior to one who is not so produced but who has the cause of his existence in himself; for the cause from which any object proceeds is superior to that to which it gives being; and, therefore, if God were the effect of a cause without himself, that cause would necessarily be greater than God. *Secondly*, God is the first Being. As we have already seen the series of secondary causes is not infinite, but must terminate in some object which is not itself an effect. As God is the first Being, he can have no cause, for otherwise he would be an effect. If, therefore, he be the first Being, he must be from himself. But he is not only from himself; he is also to or for himself, and, therefore,

In respect of a *final* cause, he is said to be independent, inasmuch as he has no end without himself on account of which he exists. Unlike all other beings, he exists by necessity of his own nature. He is, because he cannot but be; not for this reason or for that, but independently of all without him.

(*b.*) The second attribute of God, considered as a substance, is that which relates to the beginning and duration of his existence. Finite beings have a beginning and an end. Can this be said of God? We say it cannot. God is *eternal.*

We ascribe eternity to God, with the view of excluding from his existence a beginning and an end. This attribute means nothing more than that there never was a period when God was not, and that there never will be a period when he will cease to be. This is the simplest view of it. The definition which Boetius gives of it, *as the entire and perfect possession of unchangeable existence*, refers to the immutability of his essence and existence rather than to his eternity; inasmuch as the idea of eternity implies nothing more than the exclusion of limits in regard both to the past and the future, so that it has neither beginning nor end.

The eternity of God may be proved

1. From Scripture
2. From reason.

1. Scripture throughout speaks of God as eternal, Exod. iii. 15; Ps. xc. 2, 4; cii. 24, 27. He is called "the first and the last," Is. xli. 4; xliv. 6; xlviii. 12. Socinians endeavour to explain this phrase so as to evade the argument derived from it for the eternity of the Son to whom we find the same phrase applied,

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Rev. i. 8; xxi. 6; xxii. 13. They deny that it furnishes any argument for his divinity, and say that signifies nothing more than that he is the beginning and end of any work, that he is its author and finisher without receiving assistance from others. According to them he is the first, inasmuch as he begins, and the last, inasmuch as he perfects and finishes a thing. But this is a gross misinterpretation. The phrase is employed by Isaiah as a mark of divinity in opposition to idols, inasmuch as God is the creator, the origin and end of all things. And so he is called the first and the last in respect of existence, as having neither beginning nor end. Hence both are joined together to denote his eternity.

2. Reason also teaches us that this attribute belongs to God, for it necessarily flows from his self-existence. For he is the first Being and has his being from himself and must therefore be without a beginning. For if he had a beginning, he could not have had his existence from himself, unless he had produced himself, which is a contradiction. Now that which is without beginning is also without end —that which exists necessarily can never cease to be. But God always is—he exists necessarily without any cause external to himself and independently of all without himself. Such is the eternity of God.*

(*c.*) Is God, viewed as a substance, *mutable* or *immutable?* We are subject to succession of duration and to continual changes; is the existence of God in this respect like our own? Evidently not, we reply. He exists always, and the manner of his existence is ever the same. And thus in respect of the mode of his being and of the corporeal and spiritual successions to which we are liable, we ascribe to God the attribute of *immutability;* and to this attribute we shall now direct our attention.

We speak now of the immutability not of his essence but of his existence which consists in his having no succession of duration, thoughts, or volitions, and in his possessing his whole life complete, perfect, and at once. It is different with us. We are all liable in this respect to various changes, inasmuch as we are either losing something which we had or attaining something which we had not. Our existence is successive and flows in a current, of which one part is past, another present, and a third to come. We are not, therefore,

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* Such was the doctrine held by Plato. "A principle," he says, "has no origin, for all things arose from a principle; but the first principle arises from nothing, neither were it a first principle if it were originated by some other. And if it has no beginning it can have no end."

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always the same: we are different now from what we shall be at a future period—we increase and decrease. God, on the contrary, is always the same and thus his existence is immutable. This attribute has a twofold meaning—*negative* and *positive*.

Negatively, it implies that in God there is no succession of duration. This succession is either *material* or *spiritual*. The former denotes existence that may be measured according to rule by the motions of the heavenly bodies. It matters not whether it be actually measured or only measurable—there is a rule or standard by which this may be done. Now there are, as we have already said, three different descriptions of time, and our existence, it is well known, flows in the current which consists of these. But such a succession as this has no place in God, because his existence is eternal and infinite, and therefore incapable of being measured. The latter or *spiritual* succession denotes that there is a continual change in our mental operations—that thoughts suggest themselves and then give place to others, that volitions are formed and then succeeded by others. But neither, as we shall immediately see, is God liable to such successions as these, because he is a perfect Being.

Positively, this attribute of immutability means that God as such possesses his whole life complete, perfect, and at once. This definition, which Boetius gave of the eternity of God, is more properly that of his immutability. In this respect, therefore, God is always the same and invariably subsists in the same manner. But his existence is *natural* and *free*. The former has no succession, because he has all his natural thoughts and volitions together and at once, without any change in the form of either increase or diminution. The latter or his *free* existence is also exempt from succession. Although he has a will in regard to objects which are without himself and of which there is a continual succession, this does not imply that there is any succession in the volitions themselves; because he formed his decrees at once and forms none at any future period. In this respect, therefore, there is no addition to his thoughts. And when succession is spoken of in reference to him, it is not to be supposed that he is liable to it as we are, but only that different objects have certain relations to him. All these objects do not exist together and at once, but the relation in which they stand to God is changed. Formerly it was the relation only of things possible, now it is the relation of things actually existing.

This attribute may be proved

1. From reason.
2. From Scripture.

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1. From *reason*. In the *first* place, the definition given of God as a perfect Being leads us to ascribe to him immutability. For when we conceive of him as perfect, we conceive of him as one to whom nothing can be added and from whom nothing can be taken away. If he were susceptible of either he would not be perfect. The idea of perfection necessarily involves the idea of immutable existence. In the *second* place, the idea of the necessary existence of God requires the same thing,—the attribute namely of immutability. A being existing necessarily must always be the same—must be subject to no change; for otherwise there would not be in him and in his existence absolute eternity. A necessarily existent being must always continue to be what he is and be completely exempt from all mutation.

2. Scripture expressly says that God is always "the same," Ps. cii. 27;—that he has "an endless life," Heb. vii. 16;—that with him "is no variableness neither shadow of turning," James i. 17;—that "a thousand years are" with him, "but as yesterday" and "as one day," Ps. xc. 4; 2 Peter iii. 8. In regard to distance from God there is no difference between that of a thousand years and one day. The space comprehended is not greater in the former case than in the latter, because there is no succession of duration in him as there is in us.

A curious question is agitated among philosophers and divines—*whether*, namely, *this idea of the duration of God is that of co-existing or successive moments of time*—a question which it would have been better to have left undisturbed; for, from our limited ideas, we can scarcely form a distinct conception on the subject.

The question, be it observed, is not whether the periods of the existence of God can be measured. All admit that they cannot, because he is eternal and therefore has neither beginning nor end. Nor is it concerning successive existence which, as in our case, adds or takes away something; but whether there be in him a succession of unchanging duration. The question, moreover, is not whether he be liable to succession, but concerning his duration—meaning by this his continuous duration in relation to successive moments.

For he is the same in relation to all periods of time. The change and succession are in these periods and not in him. His invariableness is, as it were, in a point or what is called a *punctum stans*,*

* "Nothing there is to come and nothing past;
But an eternal now does always last."
—*Cowley.*

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just as the central point in a circle is invariable, although in the circumference there be a change so that that point has various relations to it.

The question, therefore, is *whether all the periods of his duration exists* SIMUL *et* SEMEL, whether his eternity be as it were a point or stationary, or, like ours, successive. We answer (1.) This question can scarcely be determined by us. For if we attend to our own ideas, that of duration, as it concerns ourselves, necessarily involves a succession of moments; for existence and the idea of existence is one thing, duration and the idea of duration is another. If, besides, we compare the existence of God with created objects, it must then be maintained that his duration is successive: for, as he co-exists at the present moment, so, it must be held, has he existed from eternity, although his nature be liable to no change, because he views all things as present, past, or future.

(2.) But if, on the other hand, we consider infinite duration which excludes beginning and end, we can scarcely understand how a succession of periods can be reconciled with this absolute eternity. For if there be no beginning, as in eternity there is none, how can there be succession? Succession implies both a beginning and an end. But the eternity of God has no succession, unless we say that there is one infinite duration which excludes a beginning, and another finite duration, such as ours, which is measurable because it has a beginning. But, as we have said, it would have been better if this question had not been allowed to enter the schools of theology, but had been left to philosophers. We have thus considered God as a substance and according to his various relations and attributes.

II. God is to be viewed, also, as a *spiritual substance*. In this respect we attribute to him *life* in general, such as belongs to a spirit and to a perfect spirit.

This life consists in the active exercise of understanding and will. Life in general is activity resulting from a fixed principle, although the life itself varies. But spiritual life is activity resulting from the principles of understanding and will. And, therefore, when life is ascribed to God, we also ascribe to him understanding and will, and the active exercise of these powers.

Understanding and will, then, are constituent parts of the life of God. We possess the faculty of judgment also, which is peculiar and distinct from the understanding. But this is not the case in God, because he knows all things under the idea of true or false by understanding alone. This other faculty of judgment, therefore, has no place in him. His life itself has its active exercise by understanding

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and will. Now the active exercise of the will is closely connected with consciousness and liberty. These are attributes of the will.

Now, as God is a perfect Being, his life also is perfect. Let it be observed, however, that activity, in the case of God, is *necessary* or *free*, a distinction important to all who do not hold that the universe proceeds from him as from a necessarily acting principle.

Necessary activity or life is that which God has, considered before every free action—before his decree—before creation. This life would be his, even if there were nothing besides himself; just as it was his before any creature was formed. It is founded in his very nature.

Free activity or life is that which results from the good pleasure of God, in the exercise of which he assumed certain relations to objects extrinsic to himself. This life may be wanting in him while yet his nature remains the same. It is freely exercised by him because it consists entirely in the relations in which he has chosen to stand to external things which depend on his decree freely formed. Hence the one is necessary and the other free.

Reason and Scripture alike teach us that such life belongs to God. Reason teaches that he is a Spirit. Now, being a Spirit, there must be in him that active exercise of understanding and will which is peculiar to a Spirit. It cannot but be in him. Scripture also expressly attributes life to God. God says of himself, "I live for ever," Deut. xxxii. 40. He is called "the living God," in opposition to idols, Jer. x. 10; 1 Tim. iv. 10; Heb. x. 31;—"the fountain of life," Ps. xxxvi. 9. He is also said to have "life in himself," John v. 26; to have "an endless life," Heb. vii. 16. But as in this life there are living parts, and as in these parts there is activity, we must consider separately,

First, The parts themselves, and

Secondly, The active exercise of these parts by God.

First, The parts of life are understanding, judgment, and will. But, as judgment in God belongs to his understanding, we shall treat only of

1. Understanding and
2. Will.

1. As the perfection of understanding consists in knowledge, we shall consider the knowledge of God as it relates

(.) To God himself and

(:) To objects distinct from God.

(.) The knowledge which God has, as it relates to himself, is perfect in regard both to its *object* and *manner*. The *object* of it is

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his own nature, attributes, perfections, and relations. Hence the *manner* or *mode* of it is perfect, and therefore he knows himself by inmost consciousness, as a spirit has knowledge of itself, in which sense "the things of God knoweth no man, but the Spirit of God," 1 Cor. ii. 11. His knowledge of himself is distinct, adequate, and complete, so that there is nothing in him which he does not perfectly comprehend—comprehend in all its extent. He knows himself simultaneously or by one act. This the simplicity of his nature requires. He has no need of repeated acts and thoughts as we have. He knows himself, moreover, truly or without error, and without risk of error.

This is agreeable to reason. As we know by experience, such knowledge is the peculiar property of spirit, and must in like manner be ascribed to God, who is a perfect Spirit. God has created beings who know themselves, and what we find in the creature cannot be denied to be in the Creator. Without this knowledge his happiness would not be complete. Unless he has such a knowledge of himself, he cannot acquiesce and take pleasure in what he is. The perfection of God requires this knowledge. For it is evident that a being is far more excellent who knows himself than one who does not.

Scripture also teaches the same truth. "The things of God knoweth no man, but the Spirit of God," 1 Cor. ii. 11. "No man knoweth the Son, but the Father; neither knoweth any man the Father save the Son," Matt. xi. 27.

(:) The knowledge which God has relates also to things distinct from himself. These things may be considered as

(*a.*) Only possible or

(*β*) Existing in time and therefore actual.

(*a.*) In regard to possible things or those which have not and may never have an actual existence, the question is asked whether they are embraced in the knowledge of God—whether his understanding has to do with them actively or passively—whether the ideas of them are in him eternal, natural, and necessary, or whether he has only the power of forming ideas of them—a power which he may exercise at pleasure. This question was keenly agitated among philosophers in former times under a different form,—whether namely the ideas of possible things be eternal and necessary, and, therefore, whether the natures also of these things be necessary or free.

The schoolmen held that the ideas of possible things are in God natural and necessary. This opinion was generally adopted by philo-

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sophers till Spinoza appeared, who, by affirming that all things are necessary and by thus perverting that opinion, compelled philosophers to have recourse to other sentiments. In order, therefore, that they might not seem to hold the same sentiment as Spinoza and to ascribe necessity to objects extrinsic to God, they denied that the ideas of possible things are eternal, and did not attribute even the slightest shadow of necessity to objects distinct from himself. They maintained that he had the power of forming ideas of possible things, and that this power in him was natural, but not that the ideas themselves were natural.

In our opinion the safer view of this question seems to be to hold that the ideas of possible things are natural and necessary in God,—carefully observing, at the same time, that the question is not concerning the existence of these things, but concerning their essence. And therefore when possible things are said to be necessary it is not meant that their existence is so, but their essence. There is a vast difference between these two things. Now that the ideas of possible things are necessary and natural in God, that they are therefore not formed by him but are always present to him, and that his understanding in regard to them is passive, may be proved by the following arguments.

In the *first* place, the supreme perfection of God requires for its object every thing that is knowable, which his knowledge in its own nature actually comprehends. His knowledge would not otherwise be perfect if it did not embrace every thing that is knowable. But every thing that is possible is knowable, for the circumstance of its possible existence renders it knowable; since, if the existence of a thing involve no contradiction, much less does its essence and the knowledge of that essence. As every thing therefore that is possible is also knowable and as a perfect understanding comprehends all that may be known, the divine understanding being perfect in its nature knows all possible things.

It is enough, some say, to constitute his understanding perfect that God can know all things. Just as his power is called perfect because he can do all things although he may not put it forth into exercise, so his knowledge is perfect because he can know all things. But the answer to this is easy. It is one thing to be perfect in power, and another thing to be perfect in knowledge. In the former case, it is not necessary that all things be actually done. It is enough if they can be done. In the latter case it is not sufficient that a thing may be known—it is necessary that it be actually known. Know

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ledge in its very nature implies this; for he is not omniscient who can but who does not really know all things. In this respect, therefore, there is a wide difference between perfect knowledge and perfect power. Ability to do a thing is sufficient to the latter, the former necessarily requires that all things knowable be really known.

In the *second* place, the knowledge which God has of himself and of his attributes, and which, as we have said, is perfect, supplies another argument. He could not have this knowledge of himself if he did not know all possible things. Hence it is evident that his knowledge of these things is as natural to him as his knowledge of himself. We mention only two attributes which tend to prove this, and which God himself would not have known, unless the knowledge of possible things to which they have a relation were natural to him. These are his omnipotence and his moral perfections, such as his goodness, justice, and mercy.

God's knowledge of his omnipotence would not have been perfect, if he had not had present to his understanding all those things which he can do. His omnipotence is versant about all that is possible and therefore requires that his knowledge be the same in extent. For it is not enough that God knows that he can do all things, because he is conscious of his own perfection; but in order that the knowledge of his omnipotence be full and adequate, he must actually know the all things that are within the reach of his power. His knowledge stretches as widely as his power.

In regard to his moral perfections—his truth, goodness, justice, and holiness—the idea of these is relative and embraces the objects towards which they ought to be exercised. It is very plain that God cannot have a knowledge of these perfections unless he also know all those things to which they stand related. And therefore the ideas of things distinct from himself or of things possible must be as natural to him as the ideas of these perfections.

(β.) The knowledge which God has relates also to things existing in time. These are of two kinds; those, namely, the futurition of which he has decreed, and those which are conditionally future and which do not happen unless there be the condition on which their futurition depends.

We shall consider the knowledge of God in regard to the former of these in reference

1. To its object.
2. To its mode.
3. To the foundation on which it rests.

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1. The knowledge of God has for its object all things which happen in time. But these are various according to the aspect in which they are viewed, and therefore we must attend

(*a.*) To their nature.

(*b.*) To their differences in relation to time.

(*a.*) In regard to the nature of the things embraced in the divine understanding, God knows the essence of them all with all the properties that belong to them. Hence he is called "a God of knowledge," 1 Sam. ii. 3. He knows all future things and all the consequences that flow from their natural properties. He knows also the ends, causes, and mutual relations of all things. This is called his wisdom which is ascribed to him both before and after his decree, and consists in his knowing the connexion and order of all things, and what these things are in respect of their end, Rom. xi. 33; xvi. 27; 1 Tim. i. 17.

(*b.*) These things are different in relation to time—some being *past*, others *present*, and others *future*, and God knows them according to this difference.

He certainly knows those that are *past;* because nothing is forgotten by him as is the case with the creatures whose memory is treacherous. But they are all *present* to him, though they be thus *past* in relation to time. Hence "former things" or things which were before, are said to be known by him, and this knowledge is appealed to by him in proof of his superiority to the gods of the heathen, Is. xli. 22; xliii. 9.

He knows *present* things, for "all things are naked and opened unto the eyes of him with whom we have to do," Heb. iv. 13. He knows all our thoughts, purposes, and principles, and all the ends and designs of our actions. He is said to try "the hearts and reins," Ps. vii. 9; to "search the heart" and "try the reins," Jer. xvii. 10. Peter said "Lord, thou knowest all things," John xxi. 17. Hence, also, it is said that in the final judgment he "will bring to light the hidden things of darkness," 1 Cor. iv. 5. Even our thoughts will then be disclosed and tried, as the phrase "the book was opened" plainly implies, Rev. xx. 12.

He knows *future* things before they happen—not only those which happen necessarily according to the natural laws which he himself has established, but those also which happen contingently and freely *i. e.* which are the result of second causes and which are done by men acting in the exercise of their own liberty. This is called the *foreknowledge* of God. But as some divines have hesitated to attribute

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such knowledge to him, we shall enter into the consideration of it a little more in detail.

Among Socinians there are those who deny that the foreknowledge of those future events that are contingent and free should be ascribed to God: not indeed from an evil intention, as if they envied him that knowledge or wished to cast dishonour upon him (it would be absurd to suppose that this was their motive), but because they think that this prescience involves a contradiction. As therefore it is not dishonouring to God to say that he cannot do what is impossible (and this all divines admit) so they hold it to be no more dishonouring to him and to his perfections to say that he cannot know what is unknowable. And they suppose that all such future things as are free and contingent are of this description. In their opinion it would be a contradiction to maintain that God can know them.

They ground their opinion on this that the things or events are free and contingent—that those which are contingent have no certain cause in the nature of things and are not certainly future, and that they cannot be known as such. In like manner, also, future events which depend upon the free will of man have no certain causes and, because they have not, cannot be certainly future. These persons, admitting the truth of their premises, reason from them with sufficient accuracy, and more accurately than many others do from theirs.

They take for granted that man is absolutely free, so that, in any given circumstances, he may or may not act; and they say that an action which depends on man's liberty and which, therefore, may or may not be, cannot be certainly foreknown by God, because it is not certainly future. For if it be certainly future, then it will no longer depend upon man's liberty. But because it does so depend, they infer that the foreknowledge of it does not belong to God. They do not deny that he has a *conjectural* foreknowledge of future contingent events—of what the creature in certain given circumstances will freely do, but they deny that these events can be certainly foreknown by him, because they are such as are not certainly future.

But the grounds on which this opinion rests we directly deny. It is based solely upon this that, because some events are not certainly future, therefore they are not knowable. We maintain, on the contrary, that they are certainly future and therefore may be foreknown. But how then, it is asked, can they be called contingent? We say, they are so in respect to second causes, but not in respect to God. Again, it is asked, how, in this case, can our will be said to be free?

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We answer, our liberty is not wholly independent but restricted. For it depends on motives and on the direction given to it by God. It would be infringed by the application of force whether from within or from without; but it is not infringed by the certainty of an event. A thing may therefore be certainly future, while yet our freedom remains unaffected; because it will happen while we at the same time act freely, and thus may be known by God as certainly future. The whole question therefore or subject rather depends on the question regarding the nature of our liberty, whether it be absolute or indifferent, or whether it be spontaneous and dependent upon motives. We hold the latter of these opinions. Our opponents deny it and maintain the absolute freedom of man's will.

Unquestionably both reason and scripture clearly shew that this foreknowledge belongs to God.

It is proved by reason which argues

1. From the perfection of the divine understanding. The knowledge of God is perfect, *i. e.* it embraces every thing that is knowable, and of this description are future contingent events. But his understanding is infinite and cannot be enlarged. If however foreknowledge be denied him, then by experience he would receive accessions to his knowledge—he would come to know what is, but what he could not have known beforehand as certainly future.

2. A decree also could not be said to be full and perfect in God, if he had not this foreknowledge. For he could not have had a perfect idea of the whole system of the world if he had not known beforehand all the things that were to happen. But we will speak of this when we come to the decrees themselves.

Scripture also bears testimony to the foreknowledge of God—both *directly* and *indirectly;—directly* when it distinctly attributes it to him, Ps. cxxxix. 4. A foreknowledge of future events is given as one of the signs and proofs of divinity, Is. xli. 22. In this passage "things" which "shall happen" are called אשר תקרינה, *i. e.* things which may be—things contingently future. See also John xxi. 17. Scripture gives its testimony *indirectly* when it ascribes to God prophecies of future events which are contingent and free, as the subjects of these prophecies shew them to be. But these prophecies require foreknowledge. Since then they are certain, it is evident that the events to which they relate are certainly future and therefore must have been known by God as such.

(2.) The mode or manner in which God knows all things is doubtless perfect. As the understanding of God and God himself are per

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fect, the mode of his knowledge must also be perfect. To constitute this perfection it is necessary

(*a.*) That he have a clear, distinct, and adequate idea of all things, and that nothing be hid from him.

(*b.*) That he know all things without the intervention of means either internal or external—not as we do by sensation, reflection, or reasoning, but by intuition alone, and, so to speak, without any helps whatever.

(*c.*) That he know all things infallibly (without error or risk of error) and without labour.

(*d.*) That he know all things simultaneously or by a single act of his mind, without repeated acts and thoughts.* For as he is an uncompounded Being and regards all things as actually present, he can have no such succession of mental operations as we have.

In regard to the foundation on which the divine knowledge of future contingent events rests, we shall first shew the erroneous opinions that have been held on this subject, and then present what seems to us to be the truth.

The Jesuits represented it as resting on what they called *scientia media*;† *i. e.* the knowledge which God has of an individual's disposition and temperament in relation to the particular circumstances in which he may be placed. In other words, God knows what every man will do or will not do in certain circumstances, there being, according to them, a connexion between his disposition and these circumstances. For example, Judas was a man of a covetous disposition, and was placed in a situation in which his avarice could be easily excited, when offered a bribe to betray our Lord. God might have foreseen that he would perpetrate this atrocious deed, because he knew what the disposition of the traitor was, and because he had decreed that he should be placed in the circumstances in which that disposition should be called into exercise. Hence he foresaw that Judas would act as he did. Thus from the knowledge which he had

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* That is, his knowledge is not discursive but intuitive—by a single glance he comprehends the whole system of things, all truths without any process of reasoning, and all objects with their various combinations, relations, and mutual influences without any succession.

† This term was invented by Molina, a Spanish Jesuit and a professor of Divinity in Portugal. It has been adopted by Arminians for the purpose of accounting for God's determination to give grace to some and to withhold it from others—a determination formed, according to them, upon the foreknowledge which he had that some would improve and others abuse the means of salvation placed within their reach.

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of this man's character, they derive his foreknowledge concerning his betrayal of Christ. This foreknowledge they call *scientia media*, because it occupies a middle place between *scientia simplicis intelligentiæ* and *scientia visionis*.

Scholastic divines made the following distinction. *Scientia simplicis intelligentiæ*, they said, is that by which God knows what is possible and which is natural and necessary in him.* *Scientia visionis* they defined to be that by which he knows what is certainly future and what has been settled in the decree ;† while by *scientia media* they understood his knowledge of things conditionally future —things which will not happen unless those circumstances occur on which their futurition depends. They thus held that God knows by *scientia media* what will happen, inasmuch as he has decreed these circumstances. They gave this knowledge the name of *media*, because the condition on which it depends lies between the possible and the certainly future. The things which it embraces are not purely possible, because their existence in time depends on a certain condition. Neither are they future because in reality they have no existence. They occupy therefore a midway position between these and thus belong to *scientia media*.

According to this theory which aims at reconciling the divine foreknowledge with the fullest exercise of our freedom, God knows all things beforehand, while nevertheless our liberty remains entire. But human liberty is by this theory seriously infringed, because according to it there is such a connexion between the disposition of a man and the circumstances in which he may be placed, that, when placed in these circumstances, he is no longer free, but must act according to his disposition. Otherwise there would be no foreknowledge if he were not so to act. But this theory is untenable for the following reasons :

(*a*.) Because there is no established connexion between the disposition of a man and the circumstances in which he is placed, so that he must act necessarily in a certain way. If there were, then human liberty would be gone. But if there be not a connexion of some kind, the foreknowledge of God will be uncertain.

(*b*.) Because there cannot be derived from this theory an accurate foreknowledge with regard to all the circumstances which have no connection with a man's disposition. Let us therefore dismiss this

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* Hence it is also called *scientia necessaria*, or *naturalis*.

† Also called *scientia libera*.

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scientia media, not because we hold that it does not belong to God in respect to a man's disposition,—for, as we shall immediately see, there are things which are conditionally future—nor because it may not be called by this name, but because it cannot be the foundation on which the divine foreknowledge rests. Nothing remains therefore but that

We shew on what foundation this foreknowledge really rests.

In the *first* place, it is based on the supreme and infinite perfection of the divine understanding, which we cannot comprehend, but by which God knows the most remote and hidden motives of action on the part of his rational creatures. Man does nothing without a reason either known or concealed. As God has a perfect knowledge of all actions he knows future contingent events which spring from them; because, as we have said, he has a perfect knowledge of all natural things.

In the *second* place, this foreknowledge of God is based on his decree, inasmuch as the original decree is that by which all things are permitted and directed, of whatever kind they are, and in whatever manner and at whatever time they exist, and without which nothing can happen. Hence it is said, "Known unto God are all his works from the beginning of the world," Acts xv. 18.

Let us now consider, whether in regard to things conditionally future, the knowledge of God may be called *scientia media.* By things conditionally future we understand those, the futurition of which depends on certain conditions, and which, in the absence of these conditions, have no real existence.

It is evident from the statements of Scripture that there are such conditionally future events. For example: "He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved," Mark xvi. 16. We have besides some instances in Scripture, in which the occurrence of events is suspended upon conditions. God told David that, if he remained in Keilah, the men of that place would deliver him up into the hands of Saul, 1 Sam. xxiii. 12. This did not happen because David did not remain there. But, if he had remained, it would undoubtedly have taken place. The event was thus conditionally future. Elisha told Joash, "Thou shouldest have smitten five or six times; then hadst thou smitten Syria till thou hadst consumed *it:* whereas now thou shalt smite Syria *but* thrice," 2 Kings xiii. 19. Our Lord said of Chorazin and Bethsaida that, if the mighty works which had been done in them had been done in Tyre and Sidon, they would have repented long ago in sackcloth and ashes, Matt. xi. 21. But this did

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not happen, because the antecedent condition did not exist in the case of Tyre and Sidon, that is to say, the mighty works were not performed there.

It is usually asked what kind of knowledge that is by which God knows things that are conditionally future. The Jesuits here introduce their *scientia media*, to which they assign a middle place between *scientia simplicis intelligentiæ* and *scientia visionis;* inasmuch as God by the former knows things merely possible—things not absolutely but only conditionally future.

Here, therefore, *scientia media* is required. But we say in reply, that this *scientia media* is introduced without reason and foundation, because nothing else is necessary to the knowledge of future contingent events than the knowledge of the connexion between the antecedent and the consequent. Now the connexion between the conditions, namely, and the occurrence of events, is either necessary or arbitrary and free, and depending on the decree of God. If it be necessary it belongs to *scientia simplicis intelligentiæ*, by which God knows things with their consequences and relations. Thus he knew that the inhabitants of Keilah would deliver up David; not, however, by *scientia media*, but by *scientia simplicis intelligentiæ*, by which he knows the relations of things, whether these relations be absolutely or restrictedly necessary. But if the connexion be arbitrary, or depend upon the free determination of the will of God, then it belongs to *scientia visionis*, or to that knowledge by which he knows by his decree the relations and issues of things. Now there is a general decree by which he has ordained the connexions of things. This knowledge, therefore, belonged to that part of the decree by which he instituted the mutual relation of events, such as that which we have already adverted to in the case of Joash who, if he had smitten the arrows upon the ground five or six times, would have smitten and consumed Syria. The event in this case depended on the good pleasure of God, because he had instituted the connexion between it and what went before.

Such also is the connection between the condition of salvation and salvation itself;—"He that believeth shall be saved"—a connexion which depends upon the free decree of God. The same remarks may be applied to all conditionally future events.

2. By the *will* of God, which is another faculty of the divine mind or another part of his life as a Spirit, we understand generally the prevailing tendency of his mind to what is good, with an abhorrence of evil as opposed to what is good. But this tendency is conjoined with

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power; for when there is no power then a wise man should not will. We must therefore give a general view of this will by considering

(*a.*) Its object.
(*b.*) Its acts.
(*c.*) The reason and foundation of its acts.
(*d.*) Its perfection or power.

(*a.*) The *object* of the will is either physical or moral good. Our desires cannot but tend in that direction, because as beings endued with reason we are necessarily concerned about ourselves and our own happiness. And as the opposite of this is physical or moral evil, it cannot be the object of our will unless, in so far as we will what is evil, we will it not because it is evil but because it appears to us to be good.

(*b.*) The *act* of the will is its inclination to what is good with its abhorrence of what is evil. But it is an efficacious inclination which has conjoined with it the determination of the mind to follow the good and to avoid the evil, for otherwise it will be only *velleity* or simple desire. The act of the will, however, requires the determination of the mind to do something or to refrain from doing it.

(*c.*) The foundation or reason of this tendency is a clear perception of something desirable in an object, whether that object be properly and naturally good or whether it be regarded as such by the will and choice. The will properly tends to that which is in itself agreeable; but, as the subject of liberty is usually referred to the will, the reason which determines the will in choosing what is good may be arbitrary in us who often desire for good what is evil or indifferent.

(*d.*) The perfection or power of the will consists in its being able to accomplish what it desires—in its determining itself in the exercise of reason towards some object which it can effect.

With these general remarks regarding the will, let us now consider the will of God in reference

(*α.*) To himself and
(*β.*) To those things which are distinct from himself.

(*α.*) His will, in reference to himself, is his tendency towards himself as the chief good, by which he rests in himself alone, and regards his own nature as the rule of his affections and actions. Here let us consider also

(·) The object of the divine will.
(:) Its act.
(·.·) Its foundation and manner.
(::) Its perfection or power.

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(.) The *object* of the divine will is God himself and God as the chief good. Hence he is called the only good—"*there is* none good but one, *that is*, God," Matt. xix. 17. He is the only good both physical and moral;—physical, inasmuch as he is a perfect Being, and moral, inasmuch as he is the fountain, origin, and source of all good, righteousness, and justice.

(:) The *act* of the will of God in regard to himself as the chief good is that tendency towards himself which is called *love*. Scripture indeed does not expressly say that he loves himself, but it gives us to understand that he does so when it says that he loves his Son, when he is said to love those who love himself, when he is represented as having a zeal for his own glory, "my glory I will not give to another," Is. xlii. 8, and when zeal or fervent love is ascribed to him, Exod. xx. 5. If it be asked what the love of God toward himself is, we reply, it is acquiescence in himself. As love is directed to the object which it wishes to enjoy and rests in that object, so God loves himself, inasmuch as he rests in himself, which rest is called his happiness. Besides, his love toward himself is a desire to conform all his actions to himself and to his own nature as the rule and end of them all. For this is the mark of his supreme affection, not that he simply loves himself, but that he also desires, that in all that he does he may be conformed to his own nature. This affection is also called a zeal for his own glory — a zeal by which he cannot deny himself, and in the exercise of which he does all things for his own glory and uniformly acts in a manner agreeable to his own nature. It is also called his absolute holiness by which, as we shall afterwards see, he acts in conformity to his nature. His love toward himself, in short, consists in this, that he wishes his own nature which he loves to be the rule of the desires and actions of all his rational creatures, who ought to conform themselves to his nature if they would commend themselves to his approbation. This also is the indication of his supreme love to himself that he desires not only to be loved by us, but also to be regarded in his nature as the pattern according to which we should frame all our actions, just as the holiness of his creatures, in like manner, consists in their conformity to his nature.

(∴) The *foundation* or *reason* of God's love towards himself is the knowledge which he has of himself as the good and as the chief good. This naturally gives rise to love—not a blind but an enlightened love. Perfection of understanding therefore must precede

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it. As God thus knows himself and consequently all his perfection and goodness, there arises spontaneously this love towards himself as good. Moreover, as he is the chief good, he cannot but love himself and that too in the highest degree. Although his love, however, be spontaneous, it nevertheless subsists naturally and in the highest degree, because the object on which it is fixed requires this. Now this love always subsists in the same manner, because he has always the same vivid perception of the object as the chief good. It always continues by a single and simple act which the simplicity of the divine nature requires. For this reason God loves himself.

(::) The *perfection* or *power* of this love consists in his being able without any interruption to enjoy himself and to act uniformly without any hindrance according to his own nature. This is his natural power by which he is sufficient for his own existence, and enjoys himself without let or hindrance. See 1 Chron. xxix. 11, 12; Acts xvii. 25.

(β.) The will of God is also to be viewed in relation to objects distinct from himself. These objects are again to be considered as

($a\ a$.) Possible.

($b\ b$.) Destined to exist.

($c\ c$.) Actually existing.

($a\ a$.) If we consider things as possible, the will of God in reference to them is to be viewed as a faculty which may put itself forth into action. Let us then examine

א Its object.

ב Its acts.

ג Its foundation.

ד Its perfection.

א The *object* consists of possible things as such—things which may exist—things the existence of which involves no contradiction. Of this description all things are considered antecedently to the decree, all things viewed in relation to the power of God.

ב The will of God in regard to possible things is not properly *an act* but *the power of acting*. His will in reference to these is not determinate but may determine itself because he is free. It is nothing else therefore than the power and faculty of determining itself in regard to possible things, so that some of them are left in a state of possibility, while others are destined to exist in time.

ג The *foundation* and *reason* of this will is his supreme perfection, his acquiescence in himself, and his independence, so that he

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alone is happy and all-sufficient, and does not require, in order to be perfect, to give existence to possible things.

ד The *perfection* of this will is the omnipotence of God by which he can perfectly execute it in reference to possible things. This absolute omnipotence is natural to God in respect to things distinct from himself, and is called the perfection by which he can do all possible things. But in respect of his omnipotence all things which do not involve a contradiction are possible.

Now there is a twofold contradiction—*proximate*, namely, and *remote*. In the former the terms employed are destructive of each other—as to be and not to be, to be cold and hot. In the latter the contradiction lies in the consequences and not in the terms—as, a body may be and not be in several places at one and the same moment. This obviously cannot follow or be drawn from the nature of a body and hence it is said to be contradictory *consequentially*. This latter contradiction however may deceive us if the consequences be too remotely drawn. But if they be near and do not agree, the contradiction will be abundantly evident, as in the instance already given. These contradictions, we say, cannot happen in the case of God, not on account of the want of power but on account of the want of the futurition of these things which are contradictory and of which the one destroys the other. Neither are they the object of the divine will, for he cannot in the same matter both will a thing and not will it at the same moment.

With these exceptions all things are possible, for they can be done by God. There is nothing to hinder him from bringing them to pass, and hence the proof of his omnipotence is easy.

For, as he is omnipotent, he must labour under no defect. But he would do so if he could not exercise his power, and thus his will would not extend farther than his omnipotence,—he might wish to do something which he has not power to do. But this certainly is opposed to the idea of a perfect being. Unless God were omnipotent he could not be happy. For thus, as we have said, his will would reach further than his power, and so he would be solicitous about things which he could not perform ; and this would very materially impair his happiness. Scripture also attributes to him this happiness or omnipotence rather, Is. xlv. 7, 11, 12. All things are expressly said to be possible to him, Matt. xix. 26 ; Luke i. 37 ; Rom. ix. 19 ; Philip. iii. 21. He is called elsewhere אל גבור "the mighty God," Is. ix. 6.

(*b b.*) In regard to things that are to be produced and to exist in time, the will of God exerts a two-fold act, that of decreeing namely

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and that of creating. The former of these is the determination of his will to produce certain things; the latter is the command of his will by which the things are actually produced. Scripture calls this act of decreeing the will of God and the act of his will. "My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure," Is. xlvi. 10. In like manner he is said to do all things "according to the good pleasure of his will," Eph. i. 5. But the act of creating is also so called, Rev. iv. 11. Hence all things are said to have been created by the word of God or by the command of his will, Ps. xxxiii. 6. Both acts, therefore, imply the determination of the divine mind.

But are these acts one and the same? Some, we answer, maintain that they are; but without reason and against the nature of the thing. For this act of decreeing is an *immanent* and *intrinsic* act in God, whereas that of creating is *extrinsic* and *transitive*. The former produces nothing external to God himself, but only says that a thing shall be; whereas the latter produces what is external to him. The former is eternal, the latter takes place in time. They are not, therefore, both the same act, and yet God remains simple and uncompounded. For the exercise of his natural power does not imply, as we have already seen when speaking of his simplicity, that there is any composition in him.

(*cc.*) In reference to existing things whether physical or moral, the will of God is exercised not only in actually preserving and governing them, but also in cherishing certain affections which have reference to the condition of his rational creatures. These are properly called the moral perfections of God, but improperly and after our mode of speaking his affections. We shall therefore treat of both.

1. Of his moral perfections.
2. Of his affections.

1. His moral perfections originate in the love which he has for himself, and are agreeable to the indigence of his creatures and to all the relations in which they stand to him. They are, indeed, natural in him, but yet they do not flow from his nature like his other attributes, but from the rectitude of his will. They are distinguished into primary and secondary, or into absolute or original and those derived from them. The former are his holiness and goodness; the latter, his truth and justice. Of his holiness and goodness the first has reference to himself; the second, to the creatures: the first consists in the love which he has for himself; the second in the love which he manifests towards the workmanship of his hands.

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CHAPTER VII.

GOD.

HOLINESS OF GOD PROVED FROM REASON, CONSCIENCE, AND SCRIPTURE—GOODNESS OF GOD—ITS OBJECT, ACTS, AND FOUNDATION—DISTINGUISHED INTO BENEVOLENCE, BENEFICENCE, AND COMPLACENCY—VERACITY OF GOD—OBJECTIONS REFUTED—JUSTICE OF GOD—ITS OBJECTS, ACTS, AND FOUNDATION—LEGISLATIVE AND REMUNERATIVE—SOCINIAN OBJECTIONS.

The holiness of God flows from the love which he has for himself, and in the exercise of which he shews himself in all his affections in exact conformity to his own perfect nature. We call it moral purity, which means that God is free not only from all sin and from every taint of pollution, but also from all that is mean, mortal, and infirm, and thus is elevated far above all that is sinful, base, and weak. Scripture also employs the word holiness in both of these senses.

It is employed for moral purity when God for instance is proposed to us as an example, "ye shall be holy; for I am holy," Lev. xi. 44; "Be ye holy, for I am holy," 1 Pet i. 16; "*thou art* of purer eyes than to behold evil," Hab. i. 13. On this account he is compared to light and to fire.

The word is also employed to denote God's infinite excellence above all that is low and created. In this sense he is called "the Holy One of Israel," with whom none can be compared, and of whom no likeness can be formed," Is. xl. 18, 25; xlvi. 5; and thus as holy is said to be worthy of being feared, glorified, and worshipped, Rev. xv. 4. In this sense the stars are represented as "not pure in his sight," Job xxv. 5; and "his angels" are charged "with folly," Job iv. 18.

The consequences or effects of this holiness are two;—the one having reference to God; the other, to his rational creatures.

In reference to God, the consequence or effect of it is that he must shew that he is so in all his actions—that he is holy, namely, that he does nothing that is sinful. Hence all his commandments are holy and true, Ps. xix. 8, 9. He cannot be the author of sin in man, for he cannot deny himself, he cannot will or act contrary to his own nature. He cannot, therefore, be the efficient cause of sin, for he would thus manifest himself to be different in act from what he is in nature, which, however, cannot be. He cannot but shew, moreover, that he hates sin, which, however, he cannot do except by punishing

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sin. Hence it necessarily and naturally follows that he punishes sin in order to give a manifestation of his holiness.

The consequence of this attribute in reference to his creatures is that they ought to fear, adore, and worship him as holy, and imitate his actions and affections by conforming themselves to his holiness, that so they may reflect his image in themselves and in their life. For he is a perfect pattern to us, the exemplar of all holiness, and therefore we should be perfect as he is perfect, Matt. v. 48. Nor can God hold communion except with the holy; for he is a consuming fire to the sinner, Is. xxxiii. 14. Such is the divine holiness, and such are the two aspects in which it is to be viewed. That God possesses this attribute is easily proved,

(*a.*) From conscience.
(*b.*) From reason.
(*c.*) From Scripture.

(*a.*) Conscience represents God to us as free from all sin, because it binds us to avoid all that is morally evil and fills us with anxiety and dread when we have committed sin.

(*b.*) Reason teaches us that moral perfection consists in holiness, and that sin is a defect inasmuch as it is a departure from the nature of things and from the standard of all truth.

(*c.*) Scripture attests that God is holy. It records his holy precepts, his judgments inflicted upon sinners, and his favours bestowed upon the righteous and holy. It points to his holiness everywhere in express terms, as when it tells us that he has sworn by his holiness, Ps. lxxxix. 35. His holiness is exhibited as a pattern to us. He is said to be "of purer eyes than to behold evil," Hab. i. 13. He is compared to light and fire. But the proof from Scripture is so clear and indisputable that it is unnecessary to multiply quotations.

The other absolute and original attribute of God, having reference to the creatures, is his *goodness*. This is that amiable perfection in the exercise of which he wills and does good to the creatures who are considered by him as good, according to the measure of their goodness relatively to him, agreeably to the love which he entertains toward himself, and as far as his holiness will permit. We shall consider

1. The object of the divine goodness.
2. Its act.
3. Its foundation.

1. The object of the divine goodness is the rational creature as such, and considered as good. Now the love of God and his goodness mean the same thing. His love therefore is directed to an object that is

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good and that presents itself to him as such. But the goodness of the creature is either physical or moral. Physical goodness consists in the creature's possessing those natural powers which constitute a rational being and which God as creator has bestowed. Moral goodness is moral rectitude, and is in the creatures in respect either of *principle* or of *act*. In respect of *principle* it is natural to all rational creatures which have natural powers that render them capable of moral rectitude, and which have an inclination to that rectitude, inasmuch as they approve and praise it and at the same time long to possess it unless carried by their desires in a contrary direction. But they are good also in *act* when their actions correspond to the holy nature of God and to his law and bear witness to the holiness of his nature. Whether the creatures be thus morally good in principle,—as having inclinations and desires towards moral rectitude and studying to attain it, or whether they be so in act—as being perfect in the possession of it—they are the objects of the divine goodness.

2. The goodness of God, considered in its act must be distinguished into

(*a.*) Benevolence.
(*b.*) Beneficence.
(*c.*) Complacency.

(*a.*) *Benevolence* is an inclination of the will to do good as far as it is possible and lawful to do so. It is also called the love of God towards his creatures—the strong desire by which he is actuated to promote their happiness and perfection. It is universal in its extent, because it has for its object creatures as such, inasmuch as they are the works of his own hands. For the Creator cannot hate what he himself has made, but is naturally and necessarily led to preserve, to perfect, and to bless his own work. He is called *love* in the highest sense and without any restriction. "God is love," 1 John iv. 8; "good and upright *is* the Lord," Ps. xxv. 8; "*there is* none good but one, *that is* God," Matt. xix. 17; "he maketh his sun to rise on the evil and the good," Matt. v. 45. Scripture declares that he has "no pleasure in the death of him that dieth," because he is his creature, Ezek. xviii. 32; that he "will have all men to be saved," 1 Tim. ii. 4; that he is "not willing that any should perish," 2 Pet. iii. 9. It tells us that he "so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish but have everlasting life," John iii. 16. This love, therefore, is universal, and prompted him to give Christ; and hence he is said to be "the Saviour of all men, specially of those that believe," 1 Tim. iv. 10. His

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love of benevolence to all appears also in the command which he gave that his Gospel should be preached to every creature without exception, Matt. xxviii. 19. It is said that he "will render to every man" without respect of persons, "according to his deeds," Rom. ii. 6; that "we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ; that every one may receive the things *done* in *his* body according to that he hath done, whether *it be* good or bad," 2 Cor. v. 10.

(*b.*) There is also his *beneficence* which consists in his actually showing himself kind relatively to the goodness which is in the creatures. For in this respect he does not treat them all alike but according to their different states.

If they be considered as physically good and as in principle morally good, then God shews his beneficence in supporting them, inasmuch as he preserves the goodness which they have, their conscience, their practical notions. He has endowed them with faculties, and he urges them to the exercise of these faculties by enacting laws, bestowing favours, uttering warnings, and inflicting judgments. He has given Christ to all as a Saviour, he has reconciled the world to himself in him, he has furnished every means of salvation either immediate or remote, and thus proves that he willeth not the death of the sinner but his preservation and salvation. He shews his kindness moreover in a remarkable way, inasmuch as by his especial grace he causes the creatures to attend to the faculties he has given and to make the right use of them; he effects their conversion; he preserves their rational faculties which in principle are good; he provides every means for their further instruction and for carrying them forward to perfection and moral virtue, to which also belongs his giving them the means of salvation in greater or less degree, inasmuch as he has given his Son that whosoever believeth might be saved, John iii. 16; and for this reason he has invited them to repentance and salvation. In this way he does good to the creatures as such.

But he manifests far greater kindness to such of his creatures as are actually good, whether they be regarded as at the outset or at an advanced stage of the Christian life, inasmuch as he follows them with his special favour in this life and confers upon them gratuitous blessings which extend even to eternity itself—every thing in a word which they may expect from him to consummate their everlasting happiness.

(*c.*) *Complacency* is the last form of the goodness of God, by which he acquiesces in his creatures as good, and on account of which they are said to enjoy communion with him and with Christ, 1 John

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i. 3. God also is represented as dwelling with them, delighting in them, glorying in them, and well pleased with them.

3. The *foundation* of this goodness is the love which God has for himself and for the manifestation of his perfections. He therefore loves his work, and the recognition and celebration of these perfections. As this recognition and celebration are actually made by those of his creatures who are good, he cannot but bear testimony to their goodness by manifesting towards them his own goodness. In regard to the *manner* in which this attribute exists in him, he is naturally and necessarily good, for his goodness flows from his love and from his holiness. But in exercising it he is free and acts according to his wisdom and without injury to his holiness. He is not good in such a sense that he bestows his favours without reason or to all alike. He would deny himself, and his own perfections, and his holiness itself in the exercise of which he regards sinners with abhorrence, if he manifested the greatest goodness to every sinner without reason and without any regard to his holiness. He acts therefore wisely and agreeably to his own nature in showing his goodness. Although he bears to all his creatures a love of good-will he does not bestow his favours indiscriminately. His beneficence is regulated by his wisdom and by a regard to his spotless purity and to the manifestation of his own glory.

We cannot understand or take it upon us to determine why God must act in this way. We leave the matter with God himself who knows best to whom, where, and when he should shew his goodness. The unequal distribution of his blessings and benefits, therefore, is not inconsistent with his goodness as is evident from what has been already said.

That goodness really belongs to God is evident from Scripture, which every where celebrates this perfection. Nay it calls God love itself, it says that he alone is good, that he alone is all-sufficient as the name אל שדי implies. And hence we find the perfections of God called by the name of goodness. Thus God said to Moses, "I will make all my goodness pass before thee," Exod. xxxiii. 19. All the works of God bear witness to it. It is proved by his long suffering, but especially by his providing for us a Saviour and all the means of salvation. It is proved from his nature, according to which he regulates and conforms all his feelings and actions, and which is the fountain and principle of all good. It is evident that God is good to his creatures, for goodness is a virtue required by reason and by his own nature, seeing that to have the power of doing good and not to do it implies imperfection and defect.

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The *secondary* attributes, derived from those which we have already explained, belong to God in respect of the relation in which he stands to his rational creatures, and on this account are called relative and derived. These are his *truth* or *veracity* and his *justice*, and represent him as standing to his creatures in a twofold relation, first in that of a teacher and secondly in that of a lawgiver. In the former we regard him as *true;* in the latter as *just*.

In the former of the two relations now mentioned God is to be viewed as a teacher, because, by the powers which he has conferred upon his rational creatures, he has rendered them capable of acquiring a knowledge of things, when he has awakened within them a desire of acquiring this knowledge. Hence arises spontaneously the relation to which we refer—a relation in which he satisfies their desire, supplies their defects, and imparts to them the knowledge of things. The attribute of truth or veracity makes this relation manifest—an attribute which properly belongs to a teacher and by which he truly and in sincerity unfolds his mind by words and signs.

The veracity of God, therefore, is that perfection by which he affords genuine expressions of his will. These are in the form either of words or actions. The former are employed in the revelations which he has given, in his precepts, threatenings, and promises; the latter, when he shews that his mind and will are really such as his actions require. When for instance he deals in mercy and long-suffering with his creatures, he proves that he is well-affected toward them, because mercy is an indication of his benevolence. God is therefore true and faithful in his words and actions, inasmuch as these are expressions of his thoughts, will, and inclination, and mean that he is really such as these expressions and deeds require. For we speak here of the veracity of God in his word, and of the manifestation of his thoughts by external signs and words of whatever kind, and to these we refer the conformity already spoken of as opposed to mere conjectural statements, just as veracity is also opposed to the intention of deceiving another.

This veracity in God is natural and necessary, not arbitrary, not so depending upon his will, as if he could recal and give his testimony to what is false (which is contrary to his nature, inasmuch as he cannot deny himself), but it belongs to him in virtue of his own nature and of the inherent rectitude of his will.

The consequence of this veracity is that God can neither reveal what is untrue nor even authorize a falsehood, and that we may believe whatever he reveals and attests and repose implicit confidence in all his

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declarations. His word is always true and should be received by us whether it come in the form of a command, or threatening, or promise. We may safely rely upon that word; for he will not he cannot deceive us.

That this perfection belongs to God, and in such a manner that he can never in any matter swerve from it, is evident

(*a.*) From Scripture and

(*b.*) From reason.

(*a.*) Scripture everywhere represents and celebrates God as faithful and true. "The Lord *is* the true God," Jer. x. 10. "Upright *is* the Lord," Ps. xxv. 8. "To shew that the Lord *is* upright," Ps. xcii. 15. "Let God be true, but every man a liar," Rom. iii. 4. It expressly declares that "God *is* not a man that he should lie, neither the son of man that he should repent," Numb. xxiii. 19; 1 Sam. xv. 29.

(*b.*) Reason also teaches the same truth and confirms it by the following arguments.

(.) Veracity is a moral perfection. This is plain from falsehood its opposite, which is obviously inconsistent with the nature of an infinitely perfect Being, is regarded and condemned by all as odious, and is in direct opposition to the dictates of conscience.

(..) God would be opposed to himself if he were not true. For he would be in reality different from what he shews himself to be, and thus there would be contrariety in him—he would deny himself. For, as his understanding is always agreeable to the nature of things, if he should speak otherwise than he understood and intended, there would certainly be a manifest contradiction between his understanding and his declaration of it. But such a contradiction, as we may easily perceive, is directly opposed to the nature of an infinitely wise and perfect Being.

(∴) We can imagine no reason in God for declaring what is false. Neither hope nor fear, neither fickleness of disposition nor the desire of deceiving, can prompt him to do so. And therefore where no such reason exists there can be no falsehood nor double speaking. The goodness of God, moreover, requires that, in making any revelation, he should reveal only what is true and not impose upon his creatures.

Two remarkable instances are usually urged as objections to the view which we have now given—instances which seem to have in them something of insincerity and falsehood, but which when carefully examined are entirely free from such a charge. Yet as they are usually appealed to we shall here consider them.

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The *first* of these instances is recorded in 1 Sam. xvi. 2. In this passage we are told that when God was about to send Samuel to Bethlehem for the purpose of anointing David king, and that when Samuel started a difficulty, namely, that if Saul should happen to hear of his going there he would put him to death, God told him that when he went to Bethlehem he should say that he had come to offer sacrifice to the Lord, while yet the object of his mission was to anoint David.

But here at most there is no falsehood, but silence, reserve. For besides going to anoint David he went also to sacrifice to the Lord. It is not said that he went only to do the former, but that he went to offer sacrifice, which was true. It was not indeed the whole truth. The whole truth is not in every case to be told. Now it is one thing to say what is false, and another and a very different thing not to declare the whole truth.

There was not besides complete silence or reserve in this case. For when he says that he came to offer sacrifice, he tacitly means that he came to anoint; because sacrifice and the feasting consequent upon it usually accompanied the ceremony of setting apart to the kingly office. This was the case in regard to Saul himself some time before. And therefore Samuel revealed what preceded and accompanied the anointing, although he said nothing of the anointing itself for the reasons already mentioned. There was in this instance, therefore, no falsehood.

The *second* instance we find in 2 Kings vi. 19. When the prophet Elisha was encompassed by the Syrians in Dothan, and when he obtained an answer to his prayer, that his enemies might be smitten with blindness, he went forth to them and said "This *is* not the way, neither *is* this the city: follow me, and I will bring you to the man whom ye seek." Thus he led them into the midst of Samaria, and there manifested himself to them.

But we say in reply that Elisha did this of himself and not by the divine command. It has nothing to do therefore with falsehood upon the part of God. When one enemy contends against another stratagem is allowable. But we add that there is no falsehood in the case, for Elisha told the Syrians that the man of whom they were in search would be manifested, not indeed in the place in which they then were but in another, and the manifestation was made in Samaria. We conclude therefore that there is nothing in this instance which militates even in the slightest degree against the veracity of God.

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God however stands to us in the relation, not only of a *teacher*, but of a *lawgiver*, and the sign of our dependence upon him as such is his law. The power which belongs to him in this capacity gives weight to his teaching. Thus he not only as a teacher imparts instruction but also as a lawgiver enjoins duty, that so the minds of men may be aroused by his threatenings and promises. This relation is made manifest by his *justice*.

In treating of this perfection we shall consider

I. Its object.
II. Its acts or parts.
III. Its foundation.

I. The object of the divine justice is the rational creatures in general, but the creatures viewed in particular according to the different conditions in which they are placed. We say the creatures endowed with reason and liberty, because to them only can law be prescribed—they alone are capable of rewards or punishments which follow the observance or transgression of law. Take away reason and liberty and substitute in their room a fatal or brutal necessity, there will be no obedience or keeping of law deserving of praise, there will be no room for either punishment or reward; because the law is kept according to an invincible necessity without its observance being known or approved of by the creature. But the proper observance of law must spring from reverence and love for the lawgiver if it is to meet his approbation. But the law cannot be observed in this way except by a creature endued with reason.

II. What are the acts or the parts of which justice consists? Justice in general is a constant and perpetual inclination to give to every one his due, and, when spoken of in reference to God, denotes that perfection in the exercise of which he renders to himself and to his creatures what belongs to them, and deals with them according to their situations and relations. We speak at present, however, of his *legislative* or as it is otherwise called, his *distributive justice*, because we are now considering him in the light of a lawgiver.

Now this legislative justice requires

1. That just laws be enacted.
2. That the creatures be dealt with according to their observance or transgression of these laws.

Now the objects of legislative justice are the creatures

(*a.*) As such, *i. e.* as simply in a state of dependence, or

(*b.*) As viewed in the different condition of righteous or wicked.

(*a.*) If they be considered as creatures, *i. e.* rational and free, the

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justice of God requires, as we have already stated, that just laws be enacted and prescribed; because these are a sign of dependence on the part of the creatures. The giving of them is an act of justice on the part of God, because thereby he both preserves what is due to himself and deals with his creatures agreeably to their condition and need,—deals with them, in short, in a manner suited to the relations which exist between him and them. He is the Lord,—the creatures are dependent upon him. There must therefore be a sign of sovereignty on his part and of dependence on theirs. The only sign of these is *law* by enjoining which God manifests his supremacy and by rendering obedience to which the creatures shew that they are dependent and that he from whom they have their being and on whom they depend has authority over them. Their indigence moreover requires and the goodness of God demands that laws should be imposed upon them. For as they need assistance in order to attain happiness, they are in this way more powerfully urged to seek it in the enjoyment of fellowship with God. For commands have more power than counsel, and therefore the instruction which tends to happiness is more efficacious when it is invested with the authority of the lawgiver. It is evident, therefore, that laws must be sanctioned with promises and threatenings, for by these the creatures are more powerfully urged to render obedience. Properly speaking, promises and threatenings do not constitute the basis of the obligation that rests upon the creatures to obey the law. That obligation rests upon them whether there be promises and threatenings or not. But they are added for their benefit, in order that they may be led all the more carefully to obedience and be deterred all the more powerfully from transgression. The justice of God in short requires that righteous laws be enacted and be sanctioned with righteous rewards and punishments. Now laws are just,

(†) If they be enacted by a rightful Lord.

(††) If they be suited to the condition of the creatures.

(†††) If there be a just reason for imposing them.

(†) We call those laws just which are enacted by a rightful Lord. God is such as the creator, preserver, and governor of the creatures. From him they derive their being, on him they depend, and from him they must expect all. God, therefore, has a lawful right to prescribe to the creatures the duties which they owe to him.

(††) As far as concerns the creatures themselves and the condition in which they are placed, laws are just when they are suited to that condition and to the power and faculties which the creatures possess,

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so that they are capable of being obeyed. If they are beyond their natural power, they must necessarily be violated, and thus they would be made only to be broken, which is completely at variance with the design of a righteous lawgiver. There would at the same time be no proportion between the laws and those to whom they are prescribed. If moreover they exceed the ability of the creature, the creature could not be condemned and punished for transgressing them. Justice itself therefore requires that laws which are imposed upon subjects be suited to the power which subjects possess. The case is altered if the subjects have lost the power to obey. The obligation to obey is not on this account destroyed. But we refer now to the natural power to which laws must be accommodated. There must be no physical incapacity to obey them, for then they would be unjust and the lawgiver could not expect or demand that the creatures should be bound by them.

(†††) Just laws are those for the enacting of which there is a right reason. This reason is twofold—*natural* and *arbitrary*. The natural reason is based upon the relations which subsist between God and the creature and to which his laws cannot be opposed. And so God cannot impose any command which would oblige and compel the creature to deny himself. But it is a contradiction to suppose that he wishes his laws to be kept and himself at the same time to be regarded by his creatures with aversion. He cannot accordingly enact laws which destroy the dependence of the creatures upon himself and which interfere with his sovereignty over them. They are founded therefore in the love of God and of our neighbour, and in the natural and necessary relations which have their origin in that love. There may also be an *arbitrary* reason for his laws, his own will and good pleasure, namely, and his legislative authority in things indifferent. These are sufficient to constitute such laws just, because he is our rightful Lord, whose will and authority must be regarded by us as law. On this foundation rested all the ceremonial observances that were enjoined upon the Israelites.

But the justice of God, we said, requires that his laws be sanctioned with just punishments and rewards.

Punishments are just if the lawgiver do not make them more severe than the nature of the transgressor and of the transgression requires, so that there is invariably a just proportion between both.

Rewards are just if God recompence those who have been faithful in keeping his law. Let it be observed that even in inflicting punishment he cannot depart from his justice, but that in conferring

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rewards he may do more than his justice demands, he may bestow a greater and larger blessing than the keeping of his law requires. And this is not contrary to his justice, for his mercy is of wider extent and is glorified when it goes beyond it.

(*b.*) The objects of the legislative justice of God are the creatures viewed in the different condition of righteous and wicked, or in relation to the laws imposed, which some of them keep and which others of them break. Let us see what the justice of God requires in respect to them.

In regard to the creatures who obey the divine laws, they are warranted in looking for a reward, and the justice of God, in their case, is called *remunerative* or *compensative*. And as he has sanctioned his laws by his promises, it is called also his *veracity* or *faithfulness* in performing them.

His justice is called *remunerative*, because he rewards from a seeming regard to that perfection, and not in the exercise of goodness alone.

(1.) Because according to his nature he must shew that he is pleased with the obedience which is rendered to his laws. There must therefore be some token of his satisfaction, and this can be only the conferring of reward upon those who keep his law. For he must distinguish between such as obey and such as transgress, and this distinction can be made only in the way just referred to. God loves himself and the recognition and celebration of his glory, and, in consequence, those in whom his own perfections are reflected; and hence we may conclude that the rewards which he bestows flow from the love which he has for his own glory.

(2.) God wishes his laws to be obeyed, and therefore wishes also his creatures to be incited in every way to the keeping of them. This purpose is greatly served by the prospect of rewards. But justice loves and demands these rewards.

(3.) Scripture also confirms this when it speaks of reward in the presence of God when it says that he will recompense rest to those who are troubled, 2 Thess. i. 7;—that he "*is* not unrighteous to forget" our "work and labour of love," Heb. vi. 10;—that he is just in forgiving sin to him who confesses it, 1 John i. 9. And hence it is that the words love and justice are frequently interchanged.

This remunerative part of his justice is called also his veracity or faithfulness, if we take into consideration the reason of the promises which he has given, and which although they be gratuitous he must necessarily fulfil. When once made, they impose an obligation

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on the part of the promiser to make them good. His justice thus requires the fulfilment of the promises by which he has bound himself to his creatures. He must therefore confer the reward which he has promised. He is represented to us in this light in Scripture, "Gracious is the Lord and *righteous*," Ps. cxvi. 5; "*Justice* and judgment are the habitation of thy throne," Ps. lxxxix. 14; "Shall their unbelief make the *faith* of God without effect?" Rom. iii. 3; "To whom *sware* he," &c., Heb. iii. 18. In like manner the promises of God are said to be *yea* and *amen*, 2 Cor. i. 20. Of this faithfulness there was a sign and seal in the name Jehovah, as we have already shewn. For in accommodation to our weakness he assumed this proper name, in order that he might pledge his truth; and he confirmed his word by an oath, as men are wont to do, Heb. vi. 14–18.

But on the other hand, in regard to the wicked, that is, those whose affections and conduct are contrary to the divine law and who are in consequence exposed to punishment, the justice of God is called *vindicatory*, and is of two kinds, that which inflicts punishment in the way of satisfaction and that which inflicts it in the way of correction.

The former of these is ascribed to God as a strict judge, who in this capacity inflicts punishment only upon the offending creature according to the rigid demands of his justice without any admixture of mercy.

The latter is ascribed to him as a father who inflicts only as much punishment as the creatures are able to bear. In this case his justice is tempered with compassion, in order that they may be induced to adopt a better course. On this point, however, we shall speak at greater length when we come to treat of the effects and punishment of sin.

In regard to this *vindicatory* justice two questions have been discussed—the one with Socinians, the other, among the orthodox themselves.

These questions are, first, *Whether punishment spring from the perfections of God, or be an effect of his will, and so whether his vindicatory justice be necessary or only free and arbitrary, and* secondly, *whether this will originating in his perfections be considered before his decree so that he cannot forgive even the least sin without an atonement.*

The question with Socinians is this, *Does the will to punish proceed from vindicatory justice in God?* or in other words, *Is this*

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will necessary and does it flow from his perfections and relations? They deny this and hold that his will is free and arbitrary or springs from his feeling of anger—that this anger is the desire of inflicting punishment upon sinners—that he might satisfy this desire by punishing and that this might be held as a satisfaction to his justice for sin.

We hold, however, that his will to punish sin is natural and necessary, and this for the following reasons.

It flows from all his attributes and perfections. (*a.*) His holiness, which means his abhorrence of sin, requires to be in every way manifested. But there would be no manifestation of it, if he could pardon sin without any satisfaction, or if he allowed it to pass unpunished. (*b.*) His *veracity* demands the infliction and fulfilment of the threatenings which he has denounced. For he would not be faithful if he should threaten and not inflict. (*c.*) His *wisdom* by which he governs the world requires the punishment of sin, in order that thereby sinners may be kept in subjection and be deterred from transgressing. (*d.*) His *justice* requires that he deal with all according to their desert and therefore that it should be well with the righteous and ill with the wicked, and that the wicked should receive what they deserve. There are punishments inflicted upon sinners which are for the most part the natural consequences of sin itself. We find Scripture expressly ascribing the punishment of sinners to the justice of God. Socinians indeed deny that in such passages the word justice is to be understood in this sense. But there is distinct proof to the contrary. We read of "the judgment of God that they which commit such things are worthy of death," Rom. i. 32. The last day is called "the day of wrath and revelation of the righteous judgment of God," Rom. ii. 5. "It is a righteous thing with God to recompense tribulation to them that trouble you," 2 Thess. i. 6. In like manner he is called just, when he sent enemies against the Jews on account of their sins. "The Lord," they said, "is righteous," 2 Chron. xii. 6. "Shall not the Judge of all the earth do right," Gen. xviii. 25. See also Exod. xxxiv. 7; Is. v. 16.

Our reason is drawn from the relations in which God stands as the creator and sovereign Lord, whose majesty cannot be upheld and the authority of whose laws cannot be vindicated except by inflicting punishment upon the transgressors. There is not besides one of his attributes or perfections which militates against our opinion.

Our opponents however think that it is inconsistent with the *goodness*, the *liberty*, and the *power* of God.

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I. They say that it is inconsistent with his *goodness* which, according to them, requires him to bestow upon every one only that which is good. But we reply this is an erroneous conception of the goodness of God; for the punishment which is inflicted necessarily and for a just reason, and not from his good pleasure, is no reflection whatever upon this attribute. If it were inflicted merely in the exercise of his good pleasure, it would be properly said to be inconsistent with his goodness that he should do so. His goodness requires from him only what he can do in consistency with his other perfections. But punishment is not contrary to these, for God cannot contradict himself. If therefore his perfections require that punishment should be inflicted, there is certainly nothing in this adverse to his goodness, because he exercises this perfection agreeably to his wisdom and without injury to any of his other perfections. Moreover that his goodness is not affected is evident from this, that sinners are not fit objects of it but are deserving of punishment, and that their punishment is the consequence of their sins. So far from derogating in the slightest degree from this perfection, the infliction of punishment is the manifestation of its glory, inasmuch as it frequently has the effect either of guiding the sinner aright or of deterring others from sin. Hence it is that God defers the infliction of it, and that in mitigating it and in holding out the hope of pardon to the transgressor he gives proof of his goodness.

2. What shall we say of his liberty, seeing that in all extrinsic acts he is perfectly free, so that he cannot inflict punishment merely from his good pleasure? Does his will to punish belong to this class of acts? We admit indeed that his purpose is free and may have been wanting in him, but we deny, admitting its existence and that of creation, that all his actions towards his creatures are free, arbitrary, and indifferent. For by creation he assumed certain relations towards his creatures—relations arising necessarily from his being their creator, and relations to which all his actions must be conformed. God besides cannot deny himself, and therefore in all his actions towards his creatures he is not absolutely free. For he is possessed of goodness, wisdom, justice, and he must act agreeably to these perfections. Therefore if these perfections require, as we have shewn that they do, that punishment be inflicted, then such infliction detracts nothing from his liberty, because, as we have said, he was free in creating; but, creation being granted, all his actions do not remain free because they must be in harmony with his own perfections.

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3. We admit too that God is omnipotent, and that in the exercise of his power he can forgive sin. But we deny that his power is so absolute, that he can do every thing that may be done. It cannot be exercised against himself, it cannot do what is inconsistent with his own nature and perfections, it cannot do what involves a contradiction. But this would be the case if he willed any thing which is opposed to his perfections. We deny therefore that he can will or do any thing of this description. It is thus plain that his will to punish is not arbitrary but necessary, having its origin not in feelings which have no existence in him but in his own infinite perfections.

It is asked whether God before the existence of his decree could not pardon even the slightest offence without an atoning satisfaction. On this point orthodox divines are not agreed, some supposing that God, considered in himself, might have pardoned upon repentance alone, without an atoning satisfaction either from the sinner himself or from a substitute.

It is admitted on all hands that God has resolved to pardon no sin without Christ and the satisfaction which he has rendered, and therefore it is useless to discuss this question, for all the perfections of God are left in precisely the same condition, and the only question is as to what he might have done before the formation of his decree—a question which in our opinion it is unnecessary and unprofitable to investigate. It is sufficient for us to know that he cannot forgive sin apart from Christ. Why therefore should we dispute concerning what he might or might not have done antecedently to his decree, what he might have done freely or what necessarily? It is enough for us to be assured that in Christ he is ready to forgive.

The question moreover is not concerning an impenitent person, whether God can forgive him without a satisfaction, for all acknowledge that this would be inconsistent with his perfections. The nature of the case, reason, and Scripture, all clearly teach that a satisfaction must precede forgiveness.

(*a.*) For if he can forgive one who is impenitent and who continues in sin, then he would disclaim the dependence of the creatures upon himself, inasmuch as obedience there would then be no sign of this dependence, the only sign consisting in obedience to his law, or, failing, in inflicting punishment upon the transgressors. If, therefore, there be no obedience on the one hand and no infliction of punishment on the other, moral dependence on the part of the creature will cease. There must therefore be repentance by which the sinner returns to the sense and path of duty.

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(*b.*) If besides, God can forgive the impenitent without a satisfaction there would then be no manifestation of his holiness, there would be no proof of his hatred of sin and of the infinite distance at which he is removed from it. There would be a virtual denial of this perfection in God. Repentance in the sinner, therefore, is necessary to preserve the divine holiness entire.

(*c.*) Scripture also very distinctly declares that he cannot regard the guilty as innocent, that he is jealous of his own glory, Exod xx. 5; xxxiv. 7; Ps. l. 16. There must be repentance, therefore, on the part of the sinner—nor can God in consistency with his perfections, pardon sin without a satisfaction. Neh. i. 8, 9.

These things being premised, let us now inquire whether God antecedently to his decree could have forgiven all sins without a satisfaction, and therefore as to whether the atonement offered by Christ as our substitute is to be considered as freely resulting from the divine pleasure and decree, or as flowing from the divine nature.

(*a.*) We deny that God could have forgiven all sins to every transgressor, even supposing the existence of repentance, without an atonement. We hold that the satisfaction of Christ flowed not from the free will and good pleasure and from the free purpose of God, but from necessary reasons and relations in God. This is the source to which Scripture expressly ascribes it. "It became him," it says, "to make the Captain of our salvation perfect through suffering," Heb. ii. 10. It intimates besides, that without the intercession of the Son God could not have saved the world, for he gave his Son that by him the world might be redeemed. John iii. 16, 17.

(*b.*) We see otherwise no reason for the excruciating sufferings which Christ endured in the flesh—no necessity for the varied and heavy sorrows with which he was visited, and for the ignominious and accursed death by which he was cut off, if there had been any other possible way in which, in consistency with the divine perfections, men could have been saved.

(*c.*) We cannot otherwise distinctly understand why this particular method of saving sinners recommended itself to God—a method which could not but be and which really was so offensive to men. For, if it had been his pleasure to save men without a satisfaction, and if there had been no necessary reason which compelled him to have recourse to this method, we say, we cannot comprehend why this singular method should have been adopted. We hold therefore that the satisfaction of Christ does not flow from the good pleasure

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and free purpose of God, but that it is the result of fitness on the part and springs from his necessary perfections.

(*d.*) This is confirmed by a consideration of these perfections. For as we have already shewn that these require the infliction of punishment, that punishment does not flow from the free-will and pleasure of God. It cannot therefore be held that the atoning satisfaction of Christ springs from such a source. For, if God cannot but punish sin, the punishment inflicted upon Christ must be traced to the divine perfections as its origin. It is thus plain that, considered in himself and antecedently to his decree, he could not have suffered all sins to pass unpunished, and could not have forgiven them upon repentance alone, but that in the exercise of wisdom he must observe a due proportion between their nature and punishment. If therefore he cannot remit to obstinate transgressors a multitude of sins upon repentance alone, but requires in such cases that a due regard be had to what is becoming in him, we say, admitting this as it must be admitted, we cannot take it upon us to determine whether, considered in himself, he could not have pardoned the least offence without an atoning satisfaction—and this for the following reasons.

(‖) God is good as well as just, nay he is in a greater degree good and inclined to confer blessings. He tells us that, when he punishes sin, he does what is at variance with and foreign to his nature, Is. xxvii. 4. To the same purpose is his declaration that he sometimes delays punishment till the third and fourth generation, and does not extend it beyond the fourth, while he keeps his goodness and mercy for thousands, Exod. xx. 6; xxxiv. 7. As therefore he is equally just and good, these perfections must certainly appear in all his actions, and we may speculate whether they require some moderation to be observed in the infliction of punishment. For they are equally natural in God, and are to be regarded not apart from but in union with each other. When therefore his justice absolutely requires punishment, his goodness cannot dispense with it but must be subject to his justice. But when his justice does not absolutely demand it, in that case his goodness may dispense with it, for each perfection must have due exercise. But, if God were uniformly to punish even the slightest offence and not remit it on repentance there would then have been no manifestation of goodness but only of justice, and God would have been praised only for the latter. We may therefore speculate, though we cannot presume positively to determine, whether the divine goodness shews itself in this way in pardoning a less

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offence on repentance alone. How far, however, the goodness of God obliges him to do so it is impossible to affirm, because we are not acquainted with the limits of this perfection.

(‖ ‖) As sins are very unequal so must the punishments inflicted. The latter must be proportioned to the former. But whether even in regard to the least sins satisfaction by repentance be sufficient we dare not affirm. Let it be observed we speak of repentance as a satisfaction. For there is nothing in it of the nature of punishment, except grief and anxiety for sins committed and the shame and self-condemnation experienced by the penitent sinner who in this respect as it were inflicts the punishment upon himself. Repentance besides is a proof of the holiness of God, by which the sinner acknowledges his sins and thus confesses his subjection to the divine law. For all repentance tends to preserve entire the justice and holiness of God. There is required in punishment a manifestation of justice proportioned to the nature of the sins committed; and hence it is that in obstinate sinners and in their punishment a more conspicuous manifestation of justice and holiness is required, and that the satisfaction of Christ was necessary. But whether in smaller or in the least sins a less punishment may not suffice—a satisfaction in the form of repentance,—it is not for us to say. We leave the question as we found it, and give no decisive reply.

III. The *foundation* of justice in God is the love which he has for himself and for his creatures or his absolute and essential holiness and his goodness. It is in the exercise of his holiness that he does not leave sinners to go unpunished—it is in the exercise of his goodness that he bestows rewards and as much as possible mitigates punishment. And thus in the administration of justice he acts agreeably to both these perfections. He loves himself and his perfections and the manifestation of them; he loves therefore all that tends to exhibit and illustrate them.

The rule and manner of his justice are sought for in the union of his holiness and goodness,—perfections which are never to be dissociated from each other. Neither of them is to be so pressed as to injure the other. God is holy and just; but his holiness does not interfere with his goodness nor his goodness with his holiness.

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CHAPTER VIII.

GOD.

AFFECTIONS OF GOD—SOCINIAN INTERPRETATION—IN WHAT SENSE AFFECTIONS ARE ASCRIBED TO GOD—DIVISION OF AFFECTIONS—HATRED—ANGER—REPENTANCE—SCORN —GRACE—COMPASSION—LONG SUFFERING—JOY—RELATION OF THESE AFFECTIONS TO GOD HIMSELF AND TO EXTERNAL THINGS.

Having treated of the justice of God let us now attend to the figurative expressions by which his perfections are represented in Scripture, or to the affections which are there attributed to him.

The expressions employed in Scripture to express the divine perfections are borrowed from human affections, *i. e.* from those extraordinary emotions which are so called and to which we are subject, such as hatred, anger, repentance, love, compassion, grace, &c.

In treating this subject generally, two questions present themselves:

(*) Whether affections properly belong to God.

(* *) If they do not, what they signify when ascribed to him.

(*) In regard to the first of these questions, Socinians understand the expressions in their ordinary sense and thus ascribe affections properly so called to God. Although they do not say that they belong to him in the same degree in which they belong to us, they still hold that he is not without affections such as we have,—affections, however, which he easily regulates so as not to disturb his goodness. And hence they account for his will to punish.

In order the more easily to judge of this question, we define affections to be (and we presuppose that this is known) more powerful inclinations of the will which take possession of the whole mind or of the greatest part of it, so that its feelings and actions are subject and conformed to these. These inclinations in us spring from the love which we have for our own happiness and have reference to such external objects present or future as may either promote or disturb that happiness.

Now we deny that such affections properly belong to God, and our reasons are these:

(*a.*) Affections have no existence except in those whose happiness depends on objects or beings different from themselves and is not such as to be incapable of being disturbed and impaired. But God is all sufficient and omnipotent, and therefore possesses in

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himself all the materials of his own happiness which cannot in any way be affected. He is moreover uncompounded in his essence and is incapable of being acted upon by any external object. In him therefore there can be no affections, as is evident from the definition just given of them and from the ideas which we naturally form of them.

(*b.*) Affections imply that the being in whom they are found is in a state of dependence; for as they are such inclinations as take possession almost or entirely of the whole mind and control its feelings and actions, the mind is thus in their power and dependent upon them. But this cannot be said of God because he is a Being completely independent of all.

(*c.*) Every affection is a passion. But there is no passion in God for the reason already given. Passion denotes that he who is affected by it has fallen from his natural state, and suffers something which he would not and which is at variance with his nature, inasmuch as, at the time when he is under its influence, he is not master of himself.

(*d.*) These affections, moreover, disturb our tranquillity, repose, and happiness; because according to the definition given of them they are violent and impetuous and are the cause of disquietude. The mind when affected by them is not in the condition in which it should be; for it is confused, is prevented from acting according to its nature, and is entirely under their control. They can have no existence therefore in God.

(*e.*) Scripture confirms this when it says in one place that that really does not belong to God which it ascribes to him in another. For example, repentance, as we shall immediately see, is attributed to him. "It repented the Lord that he had made man upon the earth," Gen. vi. 6; while in another passage we are told that "God is not a man that he should lie, neither the son of man that he should repent," Numb. xxiii. 19; 1 Sam. xv. 29. It likewise ascribes to him happiness and peace, and says that he is all-sufficient and stands in no need of us. Affections therefore, properly speaking, do not belong to him.

(**) What then do these affections signify in reference to God and why are they ascribed to him? It is commonly said and said with truth, that affections are to be explained according to their effects, that God produces the same effects without them which we do under their influence, and that they are ascribed to him on account of the apparent resemblance between them in him and in us. For example, we are actuated by compassion—a certain emotion which urges us

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to relieve the poor. In order therefore to denote this act on the part of God the same affection or emotion is ascribed to him—an affection which signifies his inclination to succour the miserable. The same holds true of the other affections.

Admitting this to be correct, however, it may still be said that affections do not comprehend all that the idea of them suggests to us. In reference to God they signify more than they do when applied to ourselves.

(*a.*) Effects in God flow from his natural and essential perfections, for it is the property of affections that they have their origin in our own nature and are emotions springing from that natural love which we have for our own happiness. There is no reason, therefore, why we should admit that there are such natural effects in God without affections. Affections in him then do not simply signify effects corresponding to our affections, but are natural effects which originate not in his mere good pleasure, but in his natural perfections; so that compassion in him denotes not merely an effect but an inclination to relieve the needy—an inclination, however, natural and necessary and flowing from his goodness. Scripture also confirms this which gives such an explanation of the divine justice. For the anger of God is not simply his will to inflict punishment upon him who has offended his majesty, but it is a will to punish which is natural to him and which flows from his justice and holiness, Exod. xxxiv. 6, 7. His perfections are expressed in language borrowed from their effects. In like manner jealousy is attributed to him. All this teaches us that effects corresponding to our affections are natural in God.

(*b.*) But affections in God signify more important and very great effects and a more conspicuous manifestation of his perfections. For as they are in us stronger emotions (and in their nature they are such) and therefore imply that they are more than mere ordinary inclinations of the will, so in God also they signify the production by his perfections of more important results. Thus his anger denotes his will not only to punish but to punish severely, and implies consequently a greater amount of punishment.

(*c.*) These affections are ascribed in Scripture to God on our own account, and the expressions used in regard to them are borrowed from us not simply because God wished to accommodate himself to our mode of speaking, but also that our minds might be more powerfully affected and that we might have such a vivid idea of his perfect excellence as should serve to stir us to duty. For a stronger

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impression is produced upon us when we learn from Scripture that God is angry and represent him to ourselves as such than when we simply read that he is just. Anger therefore is ascribed to him in order that we may be effectually deterred from sinning.

As the holiness and goodness of God are original perfections and as his affections serve to explain these, the only division of the affections is that which refers them to one or other of these perfections—some belonging to his holiness and others to his goodness.

To his holiness belong

(*a.*) Hatred.
(*b.*) Anger.
(*c.*) Repentance.
(*d.*) Scorn.

(*a.*) *Hatred* is ascribed to God, Ps. v. 4, 5; Rom. ix. 13. It denotes that the object of it is directly opposed to what he himself is —that man namely, as a sinner, is contrary to the divine nature and image,—that God disapproves of him in that state, and cannot admit him as such into fellowship with himself, but keeps him in a state of separation and distance—that, in short, there is an inclination in God to inflict punishment upon the sinner as such and persevering in sin, in order that it may be seen that he regards sin with abhorrence. All these things are implied in hatred which is directed against an object from which we turn away in disgust and separate ourselves.

(*b.*) *Anger* or a higher degree of hatred is ascribed to God, Rom. i. 18, ix. 22; Eph. ii. 3. We read of his "fierce wrath," Ps. lxxxviii. 16. Anger means more than hatred, for it is the highest degree of hatred, and denotes that God is filled with zeal for his own glory and cannot bear that that glory should be insulted. It implies that man has offended the divine majesty and therefore that God will severely punish him for having done so, and that he has purposed in this way to vindicate his own honour. Hatred and wrath are thus ascribed to God, in order that we may be all the more powerfully moved to repentance and deterred from sinning, when we know that by transgression we provoke his displeasure.

(*c.*) *Repentance* also is ascribed to God, Gen. vi. 6; 1 Sam. xv. 11, 35. It implies that man has acted unworthily and has not answered the design for which he was created, and that God has an inclination to destroy him for not having done so: for this is the effect of repentance. In reference to ourselves it denotes the sorrow we feel when we see an object fail in accomplishing the end to which we had designed it. Sorrow such as this, however, does not belong

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to God; yet it is ascribed to him in a certain sense, because he is led as creator to consult the happiness of his creatures. It means therefore that in his own nature he wishes well to them, loves their happiness, and desires that they may attain it, and that, on their failing to attain it, he is affected in a manner resembling that in which we ourselves are affected in similar circumstances, or that he has what we call the feeling of repentance.

(*c.*) *Scorn* also belongs to the holiness of God. By this he is represented as delighting in the calamities that befal the wicked, Prov. i. 26. It means nothing more than that he manifests the glory of his holiness and justice in inflicting punishment upon the sinner. But it is especially ascribed to him for the purpose of more deeply impressing the mind of man, of convincing him of the folly with which he is chargeable in committing sin, and of making him feel that he has deceived himself in expecting pleasure and happiness in such a course, that he has plunged himself in the deepest misery, and that therefore he deserves to be treated with scorn for having wilfully ruined himself.

There are other affections which belong to the *goodness* of God. In reference to this perfection *love* in general is ascribed to him. This is of three kinds, viz., the love of *benevolence*, the love of *beneficence*, and the love of *complacency*. But the goodness of God receives various names according to the diversity of the objects towards which it is exercised, and hence arise various affections, such as

(*a.*) Grace.
(*b.*) Compassion.
(*c.*) Long suffering.
(*d.*) Joy.

(*a.*) *Grace*, *i. e.*, goodness manifested to an undeserving object is ascribed to God. This grace is usually distinguished by scholastic divines into *gratia gratis dans*, *gratia gratis data*, and *gratia gratum faciens*. It is not improperly called *gratia gratis dans*, inasmuch as in respect of him by whom it is bestowed it is altogether undeserved by those who receive it. It is called *gratia gratis data*, inasmuch as he bestows gratuitously all those blessings which are not inseparably connected with salvation. *Gratia gratum faciens*, again, is that by which the sinner is completely changed, and in consequence of being converted and sanctified, is at length readmitted to communion with God, and comprehends all those blessings which are connected with salvation. This grace may also be distinguished into *benevolence*, or the disposition on the part of God to do good to his

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creatures, and the *effects* of that benevolence, in the actual bestowment of all that tends to promote their happiness.

(*b.*) If the object of the divine goodness or love be involved in misery, such as man who is a sinner and subject to death, then it is called *compassion*, which means a disposition on the part of God to deliver from that misery.

(*c.*) If the objects of it be sinners persisting in transgressing the divine law and deserving of instant destruction, then it is called *long-suffering*, because he delays their punishment with the view that they may be brought to repentance and so made happy.

(*d.*) It is also called *joy*, inasmuch as God delights in himself, in the exercise of his perfections, and in the salvation of men viewed in the light in which we have just contemplated them.

Secondly, Let us consider the life of God in respect of the active exercise of its parts—the understanding, namely, and the will. This activity is to be viewed in reference,

1. To God himself, and,
2. To those things that are distinct from God.

1. In reference to God himself this activity arises from the full persuasion he has that he possesses all the attributes that are necessary to constitute a perfect being, and that he possesses these securely and perpetually without either the hope of attaining greater blessedness or the fear of losing any portion of that which he enjoys. We have in this description all that the idea of happiness can suggest to us. Now it implies the following things :—

(*a.*) The possession of all those excellencies that belong to a perfect being. And these unquestionably exist in God, for he is infinitely perfect and all-sufficient.

(*b.*) A possession which excludes all fear—a perfect and secure possession therefore, which continues ever the same, and which is accompanied with no apprehension lest at any time it should be taken away. Otherwise the happiness of God would be disturbed, if on the one hand he had the expectation of its being increased, or if on the other he had any dread of its diminution or loss.

(*c.*) A thorough conviction that he possesses this happiness—a conviction in the absence of which he would not be happy. He might have all his perfections, yet if he did not know that he possessed them, he could not enjoy complete happiness and rest in that possession.

(*d.*) Not only the mere sense of happiness, but a sense of it accompanied with acquiescence, delight, and joy, and without anything to annoy and disturb.

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That God enjoys this complete happiness may be easily proved both

(*) From Scripture and

(**) From reason.

(*) Scripture calls God "the blessed God," 1 Tim. i. 11; "the blessed and only Potentate," 1 Tim. vi. 15. It calls him El-shadai, *i. e.*, almighty, all-sufficient. He is not "worshipped with men's hands, as though he needed any thing," Acts xvii. 25; "Fulness of joy" is said to be in his "presence," Ps. xvi. 11. With him is the "fountain of life," Ps. xxxvi. 9.

(* *) Reason also proves this. As God is a perfect Being, he cannot certainly be destitute of any of those attributes that are necessary to make him so, and therefore this attribute cannot be denied to him, that he knows himself, namely, and is thoroughly conscious of his perfections. If then he has this consciousness, he cannot but be blessed. Being omnipotent, moreover, he can be in want of nothing. He delights, therefore, in himself, for he has all perfections in himself as the grounds and reasons of that delight.

Nor do his preservation and government of the world interfere with his blessedness, as if his goodness could be disturbed by the care which he exercises over the creatures and over their various conditions. For he is possessed of all power, does all things according to his own pleasure, and is unaffected by trouble and toil. "He fainteth not neither is weary," Is. xx. 28. He is, besides, all-sufficient, happy in himself, and independent of all without him; and therefore receives no accession to his blessedness because we serve him, and experiences no diminution of it because we disobey.

(2.) But this activity is to be viewed in reference also to those things that are distinct from God. These things are either

(*a.*) Possible or

(*b.*) Actually existing.

(*a.*) In respect of *possible* things, power is ascribed to God,—meaning by this the right which he possesses over them all, to dispose of their existence according to his own pleasure without being obliged to render to any an account of his procedure, a right, however, which he uniformly exercises in entire consistency with all his perfections. This power over possible things relates to their production, inasmuch as God leaves some of them in the condition of possible, while he has destined others of them to future existence. It is based upon his being the first, or according to others, upon his being the chief; we add upon his being independent and all-sufficient As he is be-

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fore all, and as all things depend upon him, it is evident that he has the right to dispose of all. Possessing all sufficiency in himself and depending for his happiness on nothing extrinsic to himself, it is plain that this right is arbitrary, so that he may as he can order all possible things according to his own pleasure. This right is attributed to him in Scripture, Rom. ix. 20, 21.

(*b.*) The activity of understanding and will of which we now speak may also be viewed in reference to things *actually existing*. The relations in which he stands to these—relations arising out of the fact of his having called them into being—are

(*) That of proprietor or Lord and

(**) That of king.

(*) As proprietor or Lord he has an absolute right over all things. over all existing beings, and in the exercise of this right can do with them as with what is his own. "Is it not lawful for me to do what I will with mine own?" Matt. xx. 15. Hence he is called in Scripture "the Lord," "the only Potentate," "the Lord of Lords," 1 Tim. vi. 15. See also 1 Chron. xxix. 11, 12; Ps. cxlv. 13. On this subject two very important questions present themselves—the one regarding the *foundation* on which this lordship or dominion rests—the other regarding its *extent*.

All dominion must have a basis which lawyers call a *title*. God is therefore called ADONAI, a name which denotes the foundation on which his dominion rests. This foundation is of various kinds in human law, such as purchase, gift, inheritance, redemption.

In regard to the foundation of the dominion of God, various opinions are entertained among divines. Some improperly represent that dominion as based upon the supreme excellence of his nature (ὑπεροχὴ) or upon his priority of existence. But although this view of the matter may awaken our admiration, it is not sufficient to produce in us a feeling of subjection to him. Although one may far excel us in wisdom, power, holiness, and other perfections, it does not necessarily follow that he is lord over us and that we are subject to his authority. Angels are far superior to us, yet they are not lords over us. Wherever there is dominion, therefore, there must be a certain relation on which it is founded.

Hence others regard as the foundation of his dominion the benefits which he has conferred upon us—those especially of creation; for he is our benefactor and therefore also our Lord. But although kindness manifested to us requires us to be grateful to him who has bestowed it, it does not require our subjection. The mere circum-

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stance of my having received favours from any individual does not imply that I am on that account subject to him, or that he has any right to demand that I should be so. I am bound, however, to cherish the feeling of gratitude, because the favours which he has bestowed are of such a nature that they produce this relation on my part towards him. Nothing remains, therefore, but that we consider God's dominion as resting on the fact of his having created and redeemed us. He gave us our being; but what kind of being? Unquestionably such a kind that we continually and in all circumstances depend upon him, and on this ground he is our Lord and master.

As our Creator he possesses entire control over us as the work of his hands. We are his property, for we are by him and to him. The title grounded upon acquisition is the most legitimate of all titles. Now God is said to be by creation the "possessor of heaven and earth," Gen. xiv. 22. In like manner the apostle reasons "Ye are not your own, for ye are bought with a price," 1 Cor. vi. 19, 20. This then is the proper and obvious foundation on which his dominion rests—the fact, namely, that we are by acquisition his peculiar property. On this ground he is Lord as the creator and preserver of all, but especially as the redeemer of those who believe. Wherefore he is called by way of eminence "our Lord," who has bought us with a price and purchased the Church with his own blood, Acts xx. 28.

The other question refers to the *extent* of his dominion. It embraces all beings and all things, because in respect of all his title is the same and the foundation on which his dominion rests is the same. Hence he is called the "Lord of all," "the Lord of Lords;" and his dominion is represented in Scripture as comprehending all, 1 Chron. xxix. 11, 12.

But is the extent of his dominion such that he may act as he will toward any creature, and deal with those especially who are endued with reason and liberty according to his own good pleasure, so that nothing whatever is unlawful to him?

Can he, for instance, inflict punishment on a righteous and innocent person? Some divines, as if they would do honour to God, have been so injudicious as to affirm that he may do all things, and that therefore he may visit those who are innocent with penal evils. But no opinion can be more absurd or more inconsistent with the divine perfections. God indeed may take everything from his creatures; for having given them being he has also the rightful power to deprive them of that being with all the blessings which they enjoy—

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he may do what he will with his own. But this is not the question.

The question is whether he can inflict punishment on a creature who does not deserve it. If this be affirmed,* it destroys all our ideas of the divine goodness and is directly opposed to all the divine perfections. God is indeed absolute Lord of the creatures; but his procedure towards them must be agreeable to his own perfections; for he cannot deny himself—in all his perfections there must be a manifestation of his goodness. But if he were to inflict punishment upon a creature who has done nothing to merit it, such conduct would in no way be consistent with his perfections; nay it would be at complete variance with them, for there would be no proportion between the condition of the innocent creature and the punishment inflicted upon him. God must deal with the creatures suitably to the condition in which they are placed. If they are sinners, then he may visit them with penal evils which have reference to his justice and which suppose the existence of sin. Such evils, therefore, should not and cannot be inflicted except upon sinners. And hence arises the right which God has to punish—the existence of sin, namely, in the creature. He may indeed treat even the innocent in this way, not however in the form of punishment and for the purpose of injuring or destroying them, but with the view of trying their faith. We therefore reject the opinion which holds that God may do with the creatures, whatever be their situation and character, anything he pleases without having any regard either to himself or to them.

There is still another question. Can God as Lord act according to his pleasure in such a way that his will may be regarded as the reason of his acting, and his good pleasure considered by itself may be viewed as the rule of his procedure with the creatures? This opinion seems to be held by some who are accustomed to speak in very high terms of the will and pleasure of God, but who do not perceive how much this opinion opposes his attributes and perfections.

(*a.*) It cannot be reconciled with the wisdom of God. For he

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* It has been affirmed. "This absolute justice or dominion," says one, "regards not any qualities or conditions of its object, but God can by virtue hereof inflict the highest torments on his innocent creature and exempt from punishment the most nocent." *Gale's Court of the Gentiles*, part iv. b. ii. c. v. § 4. The author of this passage confounds two things which are essentially different. Justice is a moral perfection; dominion or power is not. He seems to have forgotten that *power* in God is limited by other properties of his nature, and that the *justice* which he calls *absolute* is substantially injustice, and utterly at variance with the divine wisdom and goodness.

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who is possessed of wisdom does not act merely according to his own pleasure, but always has reasons for what he does. Wisdom consists in this. God therefore does not regulate his procedure with the creatures simply and solely according to his good pleasure, but in the exercise of wisdom and consequently not without sufficient reason.

(*b.*) God does nothing inconsistently with his perfections—with his goodness, faithfulness, justice, &c. His procedure therefore is not arbitrary but such as his perfections require, that is, just, holy, and wise.

(*c.*) If God were to act arbitrarily, then we must renounce our confidence in his word, in all revelation, and in the whole of religion. For he may promise something to-day and deny it to-morrow. And who could repose reliance on a Being—whatever declarations he may make, whatever promises he may hold out—whatever command he may enjoin—in regard to whom there is a possibility that he may deceive us? We would be continually haunted with the suspicion that as he acts arbitrarily, he may be acting for the very purpose of deceiving us. But if it be said that he cannot so deceive us because he is unchangeably good and holy, we in saying this deny that he acts arbitrarily, for there is a something which limits him. He uniformly acts therefore not according to his mere good pleasure, but in consistency with his wisdom and his other perfections.

What then does Scripture mean when it speaks of the pleasure of God? We reply, it means that this pleasure is agreeable to the divine wisdom and perfection. Scripture besides speaks in such a way, in order that we may have no ground of complaint. It should be sufficient to us that it pleases him to deal with us as he does, to make any promise, and to utter any threatening. We should regard his will as the rule of our judgment and of our actions.

The other relation in which God stands to us is that of *king*, and hence in Scripture we find a kingdom ascribed to him, a kingdom composed of rational and free subjects, whom he governs according to certain laws and agreeably to the condition in which they are placed. A king is a person invested with dignity, who rules over a free people according to certain laws, watches over their interests, and receives from them marks of honour and respect. All these things apply in an especial manner to God. This kingdom is usually distinguished into that of *nature* and *grace*. The former is so called by way of analogy, inasmuch as all things are conducted by God according to certain laws which are called precepts. It is not so in reality, because the things so conducted are destitute of liberty and

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reason. The kingdom of nature truly so called is that which has to do with rational creatures whom God governs and judges. Yet still it does not in every respect deserve even in this view to be so called, because the creatures are in a state of disobedience, and are to be regarded not so much as subject to the divine government as obnoxious to the divine judgment.

This kingdom of nature is universal in its extent, for God is king of the whole system of things which he governs according to established laws. Truly and properly, however, it extends only to the rational creatures who are governed and judged by him according to the laws of conscience and reason. But this kingdom of nature is not truly the kingdom of God, because in it the laws which he enjoins are disobeyed; so that he must shew himself in it more as a judge and avenger than as a king, although there also he manifests his long-suffering and loads his sinning creatures with his benefits—causing his rain to descend and his sun to shine on the evil and on the good, Matt. v. 45; Acts xiv. 17.

But the kingdom of *grace* is the kingdom of God truly so-called—This kingdom he exercises by his Son, to whom he has given his people to be saved—the elect, namely, whom he redeems and governs by his Spirit, over whom he throws the shield of his protection, and to whom he communicates all that is necessary both for this life and for the next. The subjects of this kingdom regard their sovereign with due reverence, listen attentively to his will, render obedience to his commands, engage in his worship, and love him with supreme affection. We shall advert in another place to the mode in which this government is administered. These relations in which God stands, and that especially of king, are illustrated by some perfections and attributes which have reference to him as such.

(1.) Majesty.
(2.) Glory.
(3.) Authority.
(4.) Omnipresence.

(1.) *Majesty* is the royal honour which belongs to the representative of a whole people and manifests itself principally in two ways. (*a.*) A king sits upon a throne, enacts laws, and governs and judges his people according to these laws. (*b.*) A king goes before his people, leads them forth to battle as their commander, subdues their enemies, and concerts measures for their protection from danger. To this majesty belong attendants and royal pomp and splen-

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dour, in order that the eyes of the subjects may be turned to him who is invested with such dignity, and that their hearts may be inspired with reverence and awe. All these things may properly be applied to God. For he has his throne the heaven of heavens, and his footstool. He is surrounded by an army of angels who are his ministering servants. He sends his laws upon earth, executes vengeance upon his enemies, and encompasses his own people with his shield of defence. Hence Scripture ascribes majesty and magnificence to God, 1 Chron. xxix. 11.

(2.) *Glory* is a somewhat higher degree of honour and is not simply that which belongs to the person of a king as the representative of a people and which proceeds from the several properties of things taken together. The glory of God is that honour which springs from the knowledge and celebration of his manifested perfections. The idea of it involves the idea of excellencies in virtue of which one possesses a weight and importance and superiority above others. It implies also the idea that these excellencies are manifested; for, if they were not known and celebrated, no glory would accrue from the possession of them. This glory then means that these are recognized and celebrated, and that worship and praise are rendered to him who is invested with them.

The glory of God in particular denotes all those perfections which render him infinitely superior to all other beings. In this sense we find the term employed in Scripture. "The heavens declare the glory of God," Ps. xix. 1. These perfections are required to constitute the divine glory and are the foundation on which that glory rests; and hence the term has reference to them in particular. But let it be observed that we are to regard not any single perfection but the harmony of all the perfections of God as forming his glory and as the source from which it springs; because they all are inseparably connected, and are not opposed to one another. We must be on our guard, therefore, lest, in wishing to give prominence to one, we should cast another into the shade,—lest, for instance, we should so explain and magnify his justice as to place it in opposition to his goodness and grace. For there is a singular agreement among all his perfections, and hence he is also called יהוה.

To the glory of God also belongs the manifestation of his perfections by their effects. This manifestation is called in Scripture his glory, and in this sense it is said "the whole earth is full of his glory" that is, of the effects of his glory, Is. vi. 3. Under this ma-

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nifestation are usually ranked especially his works of justice and mercy, because he wishes above all to be glorified in those perfections which tend to promote the happiness of his creatures.

Still further, the glory of God denotes the recognition and celebration of his manifested perfections. But this celebration implies adoration, Rev. xiv. 7; the giving of thanks or rendering to him the praise due to his good-will and kindness, Luke xviii. 43; our acknowledgment of him as supreme governor and submission to him as such, and our conformity of life to his perfections, as far as it is possible for us to attain to it. Our repentance and all our actions which tend to manifest his perfections, every thing in short which contributes to advance religion in the world, serve to promote the divine glory. "Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works and glorify your Father which is in heaven," Matt. v. 16. In this sense also the apostle writes, "Whether therefore ye eat or drink or whatsoever ye do, do all to the glory of God," 1 Cor. x. 31.

3. *Authority* is that superiority on the part of a person in virtue of which his statements deserve to be believed and his precepts to be obeyed. This authority is usually based upon wisdom, prudence, virtue, dignity, age, and other excellencies. It belongs also to God and rests on all these foundations. In Scripture it is expressly attributed to him. "Thine is the victory," 1 Chron. xxix. 11. He is said to "overcome" when he is judged, Rom. iii. 4. In this respect, therefore, we owe obedience to him as the infinitely wise and the sovereign king, and are bound to receive his doctrine and precepts as those of the just and true God. Hence the whole earth is said to be silent before him, Hab. ii. 20; Zech. i. 11.

(4.) *Omnipresence* belongs to God as Lord and king. We do not now speak so much of his immensity as of his being everywhere present and exercising his providence over all. He is therefore compared to a king sitting on a throne and governing the whole world, Is. vi. 1. On this account he is also called the Lord of hosts. Now his omnipresence consists in his knowing and managing all that happens in the world.

He knows all things and therefore his eyes are said to "run to and fro through the whole earth," Zech. iv. 10. "All things are naked and opened unto the eyes of him with whom we have to do," Heb. iv. 13. His knowledge extends even to our thoughts, Ps. cxxxix. 2, &c.

He moreover exercises care over all things. All things were made by him, Acts xiv. 15. He is not "far from every one of us," Acts

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xvii. 27. He can uphold "all things by the word of his power," Heb. i. 3. He disposes of all and gives direction to all, and there is nothing which is concealed from him. But on this subject we shall speak more at length when we treat of the providence of God.

In regard to the manner of the divine omnipresence, we remark that it is

(*a.*) Ordinary.
(*b.*) Extraordinary.

(*a.*) Philosophers and divines are not agreed as to what his *ordinary* omnipresence is. Very many understand it to be the diffusion and extension of his essence. But this is inconsistent with his nature which is exempt from all matter and corporeity and to which, as he is spiritual, such a property cannot belong.

Others hold that he is limited to heaven in his essence but that in operation he is everywhere present. But neither is this consistent with the nature of God which is entirely spiritual, and which cannot therefore be confined within limits. He is unbounded also as to his presence and nature, and therefore cannot be circumscribed, because this would argue imperfection in him. Scripture says that "the heaven of heavens cannot contain" him, that he fills heaven and earth, 1 Kings viii. 27; Jer. xxiii. 24. Therefore he is not in heaven only. Besides, if he were confined to heaven it would be impossible to understand how he could work on the instant, how he could produce effects at such a distance from himself.

Nothing remains therefore but that we understand the essence of God or God by his essence to be everywhere present and to work in all things, because his essence is his perfection; and therefore the more extended his existence the higher his excellence.* Reason teaches that his existence and operation cannot be separated, but that wherever he acts, there he is in his nature. He could not otherwise work except by instruments. But we have no idea of the manner in which God by his essence is present with all things.

(*b.*) The *extraordinary* manner of the divine presence is that according to which he is said to be in heaven. This however is an improper expression, and means nothing more than that he is the su-

* Calovius defines the omnipresence of God to be that attribute "vi cujus ille non tantum substantiæ propinquitate sed etiam efficacia ac operatione adest creaturis omnibus." *System. tom.* ii., p. 612. In these words he distinguishes between the *immensity* and the *omnipresence* of God, the former being an absolute perfection or one which may be considered without supposing the existence of any other object;—the latter, a relative perfection or one which supposes the existence of other things to which it has respect.

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preme Being. For in ordinary language he is so because he is above us, because he is in heaven. He is said, therefore, to be there, because he there affords the most remarkable proofs and effects of his goodness, and because, moreover, he sends thence all the blessings which we enjoy here. He is not only in heaven but also among men either *symbolically* or *effectively*.

(.) *Symbolically* or by the signs of his presence by which he is worshipped. He is said to have been thus present among men in the temple at Jerusalem by the visible symbol of a cloud.*

(..) *Effectively*, inasmuch as he is present with all believers—working in them both to will and to do—imparting to them a sense of his love—and strengthening them by his Spirit. In these ways he is said to be present everywhere, and our Lord Jesus Christ is said to be with his people even to the end of the world, Matt. xxviii. 20; and to dwell in them as in his temple, 1 Cor. iii. 16.

CHAPTER IX.

THE TRINITY.

UNITY OF GOD TAUGHT BY REASON AND SCRIPTURE—TRINITY OF PERSONS TAUGHT BY REVELATION ALONE—GENERAL EXPOSITION—SCRIPTURAL AND ECCLESIASTICAL NAMES OF THIS DOCTRINE—MEANING OF THE DOCTRINE—PROOFS OF THE GODHEAD—ELOHIM—USE OF THE PLURAL NUMBER—ANGEL OF THE LORD—SCRIPTURE PASSAGES.

Having considered the nature of God *abstractly* or in itself, let us now proceed to view it *concretely* or in regard to its subject. And here we must enquire whether the divine nature belongs to one person or to more than one. In other words we are to consider the doctrine of the Trinity, and in doing so, we must follow the two principles which we have already mentioned—*reason*, namely, and *revelation*.

These principles, rightly considered, lead us to the conclusion that

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* In all probability the opinion commonly entertained by the Jews—that God, namely, could be acceptably worshipped only at Jerusalem—originated in part in the erroneous ideas they formed regarding the manner of the divine presence.

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God is essentially and originally one. On this point they agree and confirm each other. With the heathen the case was different. For they ascribed the divine nature to more beings than one, each of whom separately possessed it, although, at the same time, they believed there was but one supreme being to whom all others were inferior and subordinate. Still they held that the divine essence was divided among several subjects.

I. This, however, is not agreeable to reason. It teaches the divine unity, because, in his essence, God is infinite, omniscient, and omnipotent. There can be but one being possessed of these attributes. The opinion that these are possessed by more than one involves a contradiction. One such being necessarily excludes the idea of any other. Reason teaches also that there is but one first cause from which all things proceed—that there is only one Being on whom all other beings depend, and who himself depends on none. If there were any besides him on whom they did depend, the attribute of independence could not be ascribed to him. Nor is there any reason why we should admit more than him. For everything that leads us to the knowledge of God leads us to the conclusion that there is but one God. The idea which we conceive of him is that of a necessarily existent Being—we can form no idea of several such beings. There is besides a wonderful harmony in created objects which proves that one God is the maker of them all.

II. Scripture too teaches the same truth, and makes it the very foundation of religion. "Hear, O Israel; the Lord our God *is* one Lord," Deut. vi. 4; "I, *even* I, *am* the Lord, and besides me *there is* no Saviour," Isaiah xliii. 11; "I *am* the first and I *am* the last; and besides me *there is* no God," Is. xliv. 6; "I *am* the Lord, and *there is* none else; *there is* no God besides me," Is. xlv. 5, 6, 18; "But to us *there is but* one God, the Father, of whom *are* all things," 1 Cor. viii. 6; "One God and Father of all," Eph. iv. 6. This doctrine, indeed, pervades the whole of Scripture, overthrows that of a plurality of Gods, and condemns the practice of idolatry.

If it be asked whether, although God be originally and essentially one, he can subsist in several persons, mutually related, yet so as to be personally distinct from each other, we reply that, on such a subject, reason fails us. Scripture alone must be our instructor and guide. Reason, we say, abandons us here. It neither affirms nor denies, but leaves the doctrine in uncertainty. It does not affirm that the same divine essence subsists in several persons, because there is nothing in nature which can give us light on the matter—nothing which

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can furnish any representation of a trinity of persons and unity of essence. There is no resemblance of such a thing among created objects—nothing in our conceptions that can lead us to it. On this point, therefore, reason evidently can render us no assistance. Some, indeed, have supposed that reason does throw light on this mysterious doctrine, and that we are presented with something analogous to it in the rational creatures, who have, in the same essence, three faculties—the intellect, the will, and the judgment. But such conceptions mislead rather than assist us, because these faculties are not so many persons, but only different properties of one and the same substance. Thus also, although man was created after the image of God, he was made not after the image of three persons, but after the image of one God. It is in this that Scripture places the similitude. In order to understand this doctrine aright, we will look in vain for any adequate representation of it among created things.

But although reason affords us no assistance by making any express affirmation on the subject, neither does it deny nor oppose. It teaches the unity of the divine essence; but, although it cannot prove that that essence subsists in several persons, it can advance nothing in refutation of such a doctrine. It leaves it in its own proper place.

Let us examine the Sacred Volume the only source from which this doctrine can be derived, and which alone reveals this mystery that there are three persons who partake of the same divine essence, or that there is one Godhead subsisting in several persons, really distinct from each other,—the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit.

This mystery is called by the name of the Trinity. It is a scriptural doctrine which deserves our careful but, at the same time, our humble and cautious consideration, lest we seem to be wise above what is written. As the word of God is the only source of our knowledge on this subject, the ideas which we form must be agreeable to its statements.

But it is also a doctrine of paramount importance, both because it is intimately connected with the whole of saving truth (our right understanding of the economy of grace, of redemption, and of sanctification, depending, as we shall afterwards see, on our acquaintance with this doctrine), and because either extreme in regard to it cannot but be fraught with dangerous consequences. For, if on the one hand divinity be ascribed to one who does not possess it, we are charge-

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able with the sin of idolatry; or if on the other it be denied to one who does possess it, we are guilty of denying God and of robbing him of his glory. It is not to be supposed, however, that all errors in regard to this doctrine are fundamental. It is one thing to be wrong about the thing itself and another thing to be wrong about the manner of the thing. We believe the doctrine as revealed, but we are unable to understand or explain it; and those divines act the safer part who rest satisfied with the simple deliverance of Scripture regarding it.

With these preliminary remarks, we proceed to treat of this doctrine, and will consider it,

(*a.*) *Absolutely* or *theoretically*, and

(*b.*) *Practically*, or *in its relation to the works of God, and in particular to ourselves.*

(*a.*) Considered *theoretically* and apart from its relation to the works of God, the doctrine must be treated *didactically* and *controversially*, that is to say, we must establish its truth and refute the erroneous opinions that have been entertained concerning it.

(*a.*) The *didactic* exposition, again, is twofold—*general* and *special*, in both of which we shall

(.) Explain.

(..) Prove.

(.) The explanation is of two kinds.

(‖) Verbal.

(‖‖) Real.

(‖) The *verbal* or *nominal* explanation has to do with the names by which this doctrine is expressed.

These names pertain either

† To the Trinity of persons or to the

†† Unity of essence.

(†) The names which refer to the *Trinity of persons* are either *Scriptural* or *ecclesiastical.*

(*) The *Scriptural* names are those by which Scripture teaches that there are three persons, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit,—meaning by this that there are three distinct substances possessing the same divine essence and yet, though thus mutually distinct, so related to each other that the Son and the Holy Spirit proceed from an origin altogether simple and uncompounded—these relative names implying that the Father is the first person, that the Son proceeds from the Father, and the Holy Spirit from the Father and the Son.

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(**) But there are also *ecclesiastical* names by which this doctrine is known. The fathers of the church, not satisfied with the simplicity of Scripture and anxious to refute those who were chargeable with heresy, devised other names by which they expounded the doctrine. These were chiefly two,

(*o.*) *Πρόσωπον.*

(*oo.*) *Ὑπόστασις.*

(*o.*) The former of these terms is very ancient and, as is well-known, was employed by Tertullian in his controversy with Praxeas.* In his time it signified generally all that presents itself to the eyes and that which, in dress, appearance, and manner, distinguishes one man from another; whence in particular it signifies the countenance and face, and by synechdoche, the whole person or substance. In general, then, it denotes a separately subsisting being, whether bodily or spiritual, whether created or uncreated; and in this sense it is employed here. Its primary signification is a mask. Still this name was not sufficient to give a distinct view of what it was intended to explain. If, when persons are spoken of, the term be not clearly defined and understood, it may mean only so many manifestations of the Godhead. And such was the meaning attached to it by the Nestorians and Sabellians. They held that the persons were only three different aspects in which the one God chose to present himself to men. Hence it is that there was afterwards employed the word

(*oo.*) *ὑπόστασις or substantia,* which properly signifies a substance or substratum, but which properly has a separate subsistence and is at the same time the subject of certain conditions to which other conditions are attached. But neither is this name sufficiently distinct and unambiguous. It signifies, as we have said, a substratum possessed of certain attributes and accidents as the conditions of their being. It is used either *abstractly* in the sense of a substance or subsistence or *concretely* in the sense of essence by which a certain subject is characterised.

(*) In the former sense it was used by the Latins in the fourth century, who maintained that there were three persons and one substance in God. In this sense it is employed by the apostle. In his Epistle to the Hebrews (chap. i. 3) he calls the Son "the express image" of the *ὑπόστασις* of the Father, not certainly of his *person* but of his *nature* which is in the Son, and of which he is the personal

* Praxeas, who lived in the second century, maintained that there was no distinction between Father, Son, and Spirit as individual subjects.

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image. For that which characterises the Father as a person is distinct from the person of the Son. And thus Paul and the Latins seem to concur in their use of the term.

(**) The word is also employed *concretely* to denote the essence by which a person is characterised. Now as the Greek Christians in the fourth century held that there were three ὑποστάσεις, the ambiguity caused by this use of the term created considerable opposition between them and the Latins, an opposition which, as we have shewn in our Ecclesiastical History,* was brought to a termination by Athanasius.

What then it may be asked is the meaning of the word *persona* or *hypostasis*? what is its peculiar ecclesiastical meaning? The meanings given are various, on an examination of which however we will not enter now. We are inclined to adopt that given by Boetius who defines it to be an individual rational substance—a substance to distinguish it from a condition of being, a rational substance to distinguish it from what is material, and an individual substance to shew that it is separate and distinct from other objects and that, as the word person properly denotes, it is incapable of being communicated to others.

(††) But we said that the names employed to express the doctrine now under consideration relate not only to the *Trinity of persons* but also to the *unity of essence*. By essence we understand the nature of God viewed abstractly—the attributes and perfections of Him in comparison with whom the gods of the heathen are said to be, by nature, "no gods." The three persons are thus called one God, because they have one and the same essence or οὐσια, a term employed in opposition to the Arians by the council of Nice, which held that the three persons were ὁμοουσιοι, by which they meant that the same essence belonged to them all.

Scripture declares that the Father and the Son are one (John x 30)—that the Son is God equally with the Father—that the Father is in the Son—that the Spirit knows all things—declarations intimating perfect unity. We forbear investigating the general designation *Trinity*, which is now usually employed. Although it is not altogether free from objection, it may notwithstanding be retained, provided it be properly explained and understood.

(‖‖) And now, in regard to the thing itself which these names

* Institutiones Historiæ Ecclesiæ, Vol. iv.

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designate, we understand the Trinity to mean three persons possessed of the same divine nature. Let us explain this a little more in detail.

1. We say that there are three ὑποστάσεις or subsistences, truly and properly so called, who are mutually distinct—each possessed of intelligence, subsisting by itself, and not communicated or communicable to the others—and whom we call persons, according to the definition we have given of that term. We do not mean by this that there are three modes of subsistence or three modes of manifestation, but, as we have said, three intelligent subsistences really distinct from each other. For a person suggests the idea of one possessed of intelligence and power, and subsisting by himself, and such is our meaning when we say that there are three persons in the Godhead.

2. We say that the three persons or subsistences or ὑπόστασεις have each really a divine nature—a nature including all the attributes which we have already spoken of as belonging to a perfect Being, such as independence, eternity, immutability, omnipotence, &c.

3. We say that these subsistences have not a separate but one and the same divine nature. There is but one God, as we have said, and therefore there must be but one divine nature existing in each—the same *numerical* and not merely the same *specific* essence common to the three.*

4. We say, moreover, that the three persons partaking of one and the same essence stand in close relation to each other—the second person being from the first and the third from the first and second. This relation is implied in the names Father, Son, and Spirit—the Father being the source of the one essence which is partaken of by the other two. This participation of essence, in reference to the Son, is called *generation*—and, in reference to the Spirit, *procession* or *spiration*.

Such is a simple and, as far as we can attain to it, a clear explanation of the mystery of the Trinity—from which we may know at least generally what we are to understand by this doctrine.

(..) Before adducing the proof which we have to offer of this doctrine we would lay down this postulate,—that Scripture, namely, when speaking of God, gives forth its statements carefully and deliberately, that these must be understood according to the meaning which the

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* When it is said that the divine essence is *numerically* one, it is meant that, although there be more than one divine person, there is only *one God;* whereas if it be said that that essence is merely *specifically* the same, this would be the same as affirming that there are *three Gods*.

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words and phrases really bear, and that they cannot be interpreted by a mode of speaking which leads or has a tendency to lead us into error.

It is necessary to keep this in mind. The subject we are considering is one of the greatest importance and must be determined by the word of God. He is presented to us there as jealous of his glory. "I am the Lord, that is my name, and my glory will I not give to another, neither my praise to graven images," Is. xlii. 8. He will not suffer his name to be taken in vain and will visit with punishment all who confound him with his creatures. And as he is thus jealous, he must reveal himself to men as such, and make use of language which may lead them to be on their guard against the sin of robbing him of that which belongs exclusively to him.

The design of Scripture also is to lead men to the right knowledge of God, and to correct the erroneous opinion regarding a plurality of gods which prevailed at the time when it was written. It everywhere inculcates the truth that there is only one God and utters its warning voice against idolatry, Deut. vi. 4 ; 1 Cor. viii. 6 ; 1 John v. 21. This being its design, it is necessary that it make use of language which may be distinctly understood, and which may not furnish even the slightest pretext for entertaining the erroneous opinion which it condemns.

Scripture never, in any one instance, designates any single person by the name of God, except in a relative sense. In the Old Testament, indeed, chief magistrates are called *gods*, Ps. lxxxii. 6. In the New Testament we read also of false gods, 1 Cor. viii. 5. But neither in the Old nor in the New is any single person absolutely called a god. Moses, it is true, is said to have been given as a *god* to Aaron, Exod. iv. 16. But this is said of him not in an absolute but in a restricted sense, in reference namely to Pharaoh whom God commanded by Aaron to let the Israelites go. As Scripture therefore makes a cautious and guarded use of the name, it is plain that it does so for the purpose of preserving us from falling into error. If this be not admitted, and if Scripture speak in the style of those who acknowledge more gods than one, it would be impossible for us to avoid mistake on the subject. But God cannot tempt any man. He must, as we have said, furnish correct ideas regarding himself; and therefore, the words, in which Scripture conveys these ideas, must be understood according to the signification which they literally bear.

This postulate being premised, let us proceed to the proof. This consists of two parts—the one, that there is a plurality of persons in

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the Godhead—the other, that the persons are three and only three.

We prove that there is a plurality of persons in the Godhead by arguments drawn from the following sources. 1. From the name *Elohim*. The argument derived from this source rests on two foundations ; in the first place, on the fact that, although the name is sometimes found in the singular, it is really of the plural number as we have shewn before; and, secondly, on the fact, that the name is one of essence, which, as we have also shewn, generally suggests to us the idea of God. From this, therefore, we derive an argument that the name cannot be applied to God, and could not indeed have been applied to him, if in his nature there were not a plurality of divine persons or subsistences, because, as we have said, the name is one of essence and is of the plural number. But a name of essence in the plural number always implies that there are more than one to whom that essence is common. We cannot apply the term angels to one angel nor the term men to one man, and neither can we use the word ELOHIM in reference to one divine person. For where there is unity only, there also the name that relates to essence must be used in the singular number. But when, though it has a singular, it is nevertheless employed in the plural, the idea is conveyed to us that there are more than one who partake of the same nature. If, therefore, there be not a plurality of persons in the Godhead, Scripture would not have used the word in the plural form.

To this it may be objected that Scripture is written in the Oriental style, which requires that, when one person is spoken of, the plural number as expressive of dignity and honour shall be employed. Thus *Adonim* is used to denote one Lord, and *Elohim* one God. But we say in reply that, while the latter is invariably employed, we find very few instances of the former. A name denoting lordship may be used in the plural number, because lordship embraces more things than one, and no one can be called lord unless he have several possessions. But it is not so with a name of essence. In respect of one and the same essence, one person cannot be expressed in the plural number. Scripture does not simply employ the word Jehovah in the plural, but it also places it in construction with words and epithets in the same number, thus clearly intimating that it means to convey the idea of there being a plurality of persons who partake of the same essence We find it thus used in Joshua xxiv. 19, "He is an holy God (ELOHIM) ;" in Hosea xii. 2, "The Lord (ELOHIM) hath also a controversy," &c. ; in Eccles. xii. 13, "Fear God" (ELOHIM) ; in Is. liv. 5, "Thy Maker (ELO-

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HIM) is thy husband;" and in Gen. xxxv. 9, "And God (ELOHIM) appeared unto Jacob." We also find this name in the plural number when it is given to civil rulers, "Ye are gods" (ELOHIM), Ps. lxxxii. 6. If there were not several persons in the Godhead, Scripture, according to the axiom we have laid down, would not use such language as this, because its design is to dissuade from idolatry and to conduct us to the right knowledge of God. Now, in order to preserve our hypothesis intact, Scripture must be exceedingly cautious in using the plural number when treating of this subject, because it might give occasion to suppose that there were more gods than one. But as it has used the plural number and laid aside the singular, there must be a plurality of persons. The plural would not have been employed if it had not been the design of Scripture to teach this doctrine.

It may be objected again that Scripture accommodates its style of speaking to common opinion and to received customs; for, at the time when it was written, the heathen generally believed in a plurality of gods. This, however, is at direct variance with the design of Scripture and with the postulate which we have assumed. So far indeed should Scripture be from accommodating itself in this matter to the opinion of those who held that there were more gods than one, that it should rather directly oppose the ordinary style in the expressions and modes of speaking which it employs; for otherwise it could not have withdrawn men from the belief of the erroneous doctrine to which we now refer. It is precarious for Scripture to accommodate itself to idolatrous practices and to received opinions which are false and dishonouring to God. The objection, therefore, is absurd.

But it may be said further that the name is employed also to denote one divine person, as in Ps. xlv. 7, "God thy God hath anointed thee," and that therefore it affords no proof of there being a plurality of persons in the Godhead. It is wonderful that some amongst ourselves should be influenced by this reasoning, seeing that even when it is applied to a single person it may have a plural form. For this name in the plural may be used to denote individuals, each of whom partakes of the same divine essence that is common to the three. The name indeed in the original implies plurality; but, as we have said, each of the persons in that plurality, partaking of the same essence, has an equal right to the name. Just as in the case of two or three men we may say of them individually that they are men, so if there are three divine persons we may say of each what we say of the three —ELOHIM is the same as one of the ELOHIM. The plural form of

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this name therefore in the original remains entire, but it is usually employed to denote each of the persons who partake of the same essence. As it is said that the Ark rested upon the mountains,that is upon one of the mountains, of Ararat, so each of the persons may be called ELOHIM because each of them is one of the divine persons. There is nothing therefore to prevent the name's being applied to a single person—there is nothing to impair in the slightest degree the strength of the argument.

2. Another argument in proof of there being a plurality of persons in the Godhead may be drawn from this circumstance that God, when speaking of himself in Scripture, makes use of the plural number. "Let *us* make man in our own image," Gen. i. 26; "Behold the man is become as one of *us*," Gen. iii. 22; "Go to, let *us* go down," Gen. xi. 7. Why is such a mode of speaking as this employed if there be only one divine person? The reason is obvious according to our hypothesis—to teach the doctrine, namely, that there are more persons than one. But deny the Trinity or a plurality of persons and no cause can be assigned why Scripture employs so often and not without good reason such a form of expression.

Some maintain that this is only another instance of accommodation on the part of Scripture to the ordinary mode of speaking—to the style employed by the great who, to mark their own dignity, speak of themselves in the plural number. Thus, as a king may say, *we* command this or that, so one divine person speaking of himself may employ the form, "let *us* make man." But we reply that this form of speech is altogether unusual in Scripture, nor can it be proved to have been in use among the nations of the East. One passage indeed is referred to, in which our Lord says, "*We* speak that *we* do know and testify that *we* have seen; and ye receive not *our* witness," John iii. 11. But he is speaking there of himself and of the Holy Spirit. We find the Apostle also saying—"*we* have received grace and apostleship," Rom. i. 5; but this is to be understood not of himself alone but of others in conjunction with him. This mode of speaking among men arose from a wish on the part of kings, when speaking in their own name, for modesty's sake to unite with them the people whom they represented, so that the voice of one might be as the voice of the whole; and thus they might say not *I* but *we*. This, however, does not hold in regard to God. The style employed in Scripture in reference to him is designed to communicate correct information concerning him, and, therefore, when he speaks of himself in the plural number, we must admit that there is a plurality of persons.

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It is said that, in the passages, "let *us* make man," "let *us* go down," &c., God may be addressing angels. This, however, is perfectly absurd. We are not made after the image of angels. The image is expressly called the image of God. Angels are not associated with God in the work of creation, because they themselves are creatures. No mention is made of angels. God speaks without distinguishing them—"let *us* make." In no passage of Scripture are they spoken of as associated with God in the same way. It is distinctly affirmed in different places that man was made after the image of God. No reason, therefore, can be assigned for this form of expression, if a plurality of persons be denied. This argument is confirmed by the fact not only that Scripture calls God ELOHIM, but also that it calls ELOHIM in the plural number *makers* and *husbands*, Eccles. xii. 1; Is. liv. 5.

In regard to what is said in Gen. iii. 22, "Behold the man has become as one of us," &c., an objection has been made which scarcely deserves notice and which is at variance with the truth and with the scope and meaning of the words. The passage according to this objection should be rendered, Behold the man has become possessed of knowledge self-derived, like one who has attained knowledge in the exercise of his own powers: whereas it is in the text "one *of us*."

3. A *third* argument in proof of the doctrine now under consideration is this—Frequent mention is made in the Old Testament of the angel of the Lord, of whom we first read in the account given of Hagar, Gen. xvi. Now what angel is this and of what kind—Is he a created or uncreated being? It is admitted by all that he is distinct from Jehovah himself, for he is called his angel. He must be some other than Jehovah, else such a statement would not have been found in Scripture; Jehovah is one and as is well known cannot be called the angel of himself. The only question is as to his being a creature or not. And our reply to this question is that he is the uncreated and true God. If this be true, there will be several divine persons in the Godhead and at the same time one divinity who is Jehovah, and he who is called the angel of Jehovah will be the angel Jehovah.

This is very evident especially from the names, titles, attributes, and divine honour ascribed to him. He is expressly called ELOHIM, ADONAI, and JEHOVAH—he is said to be omniscient, omnipotent—and he is represented as performing divine works such as redeeming Jacob from all evil, Gen. xlviii. 16; conducting the Israelites to Canaan, Ex. xxiii. 23; Is. lxiii. 9–12. Divine honour is paid to him, Gen xlviii. 16; Ex. iii. 6.

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But these perfections it is said and this honour have been ascribed to this angel as to an ambassador who represents the person of him by whom he is sent, that is, the person of God. In the present case, however, such a similitude will clearly not hold. For we are not speaking here of a dramatic representation, nor are dramatic persons here introduced; we have to do with a statement of facts. An ambassador we know assumes to himself many things that belong to him who sends him, but he does not assume all. He does not on his own authority express any wish or give forth a command to do so and so, but always premises, this is the will or command of my sovereign. He thus speaks and acts in the name of his king, as the prophets were wont to do, "Thus saith the Lord." Nor can he lay claim to every mark of honour which belongs to his sovereign. But here the angel expressly and directly says "I am the Lord." He attributes to himself all honour; he assumes it as belonging to himself, and by his own presence imparts holiness to the place in which he is found.

As all the divine attributes, therefore, are given in Scripture to this angel, it is evident that he is truly a divine person. But to make the general argument still clearer and more weighty, it will be proper to examine some of those passages in which he is represented as possessed of the perfections peculiarly belonging to God.

The first of these passages is Gen. xxviii. 13, compared with Gen. xxxi. 11–13. He who appeared to Jacob in vision standing on the top of the ladder is called, in one place, the angel of God and in another God. It is especially to be observed that the angel of God is here distinguished from the other angels who ascended and descended upon the ladder. He was not, therefore, one of those whom Jacob saw, but their head and Lord, and, in blessing the patriarch, he presents all the marks of true and essential divinity. In Gen. xxxii. 24, &c., the angel of God is represented as wrestling with Jacob, and as overcome by the patriarch. Jacob would not let him go until he blessed him, and therefore his name was called Israel, because as a prince he had power and prevailed with God. The angel of the Lord is thus the same as God by whom Jacob was blessed. What is here said of the angel is expressly said of God himself, Hos. xii. 3–5. In Gen. xlviii. 15, 16, Jacob implored a blessing on the sons of Joseph not only from God but also from the angel. But of this passage we say no more at present. In Exod. iii. 2, &c., the angel of Jehovah who appeared to Moses calls himself Jehovah—the God of Abraham, of Isaac, and of Jacob. His presence made the place whereon he stood holy ground. God is distinctly said to have ap-

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peared to him out of the midst of the bush, and the blessing bestowed upon Joseph is called the "good-will of him that dwelt in the bush," Deut. xxxiii. 16. In Exod. xiv. 19, the angel of Jehovah who accompanied the pillar of fire and of cloud which is the abode of the true God is distinguished from the pillar as the dweller from the house, lest any should confound the angel of Jehovah with it.

In Exod. xxiii. 21, God says of the angel, "My name is in him." The name signifies the character of divinity: what is characteristic therefore of divinity, even the divine nature, is in him. He is called the angel of Jehovah's presence, he is distinguished from other angels, and is confounded with God. When God suffered himself to be entreated by Moses to go before the Israelites, he promised that his angel should lead them to the land of Canaan. Moses, grieved that God himself was not to go, but that he was to send an angel, asked that his presence might accompany them, and his request was granted. The angel, doubtless, is the very presence of God, for Moses submitted that he should go before the people. He who is distinguished from a common angel is confounded with God himself, and is called the angel of God's presence who redeemed his people, led them through the Red Sea, and bare and carried them all the days of old, Is. lxiii. 9.

4. Our fourth argument is founded on express passages of Scripture, in which several or at least two are mentioned of the same name and as partaking of the same essence. Thus in Ps. xlv. 6, "Thy throne, O God, is for ever and ever," and in the 7th verse, "Therefore God, thy God, hath anointed thee with the oil of gladness." The person here spoken of, *i. e.* the Son, is called God and is conjoined with God.

Some, however, object and say that reference is made in this passage to Solomon, who by hyperbole is called God. But who can tolerate such an objection as this? When the true God is spoken of, how could Solomon be associated with him? Where in Scripture is any single person called God? This, as we have already seen, is in direct contradiction to the letter and spirit of the word of God. We have here, besides, marks of divinity. For he is said to sit on a throne which is to endure for ever; he is represented as fairer than all the sons of men, as having grace poured into his lips, and as the object of divine worship and adoration; and all these are characteristic of true divinity.

It is objected again that this person is not called God, but that the words should be rendered, "God hath anointed thee" by repetition and

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in the same case, so that the same person is meant by God spoken of in an absolute and relative sense. "He who is God and who is thy God hath anointed thee." But certainly the person is immediately after distinguished when it is said, "thy throne, O God." Grotius supposes that these words should be rendered, "thy throne is God," meaning thereby that God is the strength and foundation of the throne. But this is a very unusual expression. Nowhere in Scripture is the throne of man represented as established on God. We must conclude, therefore, that he who is here spoken of is called God and is another and different person, for he is associated with God under the same name, and thus divinity belongs equally to them both.

Ps. cx. 1, "The Lord said unto my Lord," &c. We believe that this Psalm was written by David. This is evident from the title which it bears, and is confirmed by Christ himself, Matt. xxii. 43, 44. Now we hold that no Christian can be called the Lord of David, and that he who is thus designated is the true God. We understand the person to be the Messiah, the Son of David, who in respect of his superior nature is David's Lord. But how could he be so, if he were his Son? This was the reasoning which our Lord employed with the Jews in the passage from Matthew's gospel just quoted, and which they could not answer. David acknowledged no man as his Lord. Christ represented his own majesty and dignity as consisting in his being the Son of David. The person, therefore, whom David dignifies with this title is truly a divine person. Several marks of divinity, besides, are ascribed to him. He was to "send the rod of his strength out of Zion,"—he was to be a "priest for ever," neither of which can be predicated of a mere man.

But let us now prove that there are *three* persons in the Godhead. There are passages in the Old Testament which not only bear particularly upon the doctrine of the Trinity and which, if this doctrine be not admitted, cannot be satisfactorily explained, but which furnish direct and complete evidence in its favour. We have, for instance, those in which the name of God is thrice successively employed, Josh. xxii. 22; Is. vi. 3. There is a particular emphasis, in this threefold repetition of the name, for the rendering should not be, as some would have it, the Lord, the Lord of Lords, but the Lord, the Lord, Jehovah. If, in these passages, there be a reference to the Trinity, it is easy to account for this repetition: if there be not, then the language is chargeable with tautology. But in the quotation from Isaiah where holiness is three times ascribed to God, it is added

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that the prophet saw the glory of God. There was a reason, therefore, for this form of ascription; for, as we learn from the New Testament, Isaiah saw in vision both the Son and the Spirit. The Trinity appeared to him, for he saw the glory of Christ, John xii. 41; and the Holy Spirit spake to him and by him, Acts xxviii. 25, 26. The threefold repetition of the name has reference to this doctrine. The sacerdotal benediction under the law also clearly points to it, in which there occurs a similar repetition of the name of God, Numb. vi. 24-26.

But there are passages which afford clearer evidence of this doctrine. One of these contains the benediction which Jacob, just before his death, implored upon the sons of Joseph. "God, before whom my fathers . . . . did walk, the God which fed me all my life long unto this day, the Angel which redeemed me from all evil, bless the lads." Gen. xlviii. 15, 16. If the doctrine of the Trinity be not revealed in this passage, it will be difficult to account for so long a preface. But let us examine it a little more closely.

(.) We have mention made in the words of Jacob of three distinct persons—"God before whom my fathers did walk," and "the Angel who redeemed me"—here we have at least *two* persons; but it is further said, "the God which fed me." The last of these is unquestionably distinguished from the Angel, and also from God before whom his fathers walked. There are thus three distinct persons, under three personal names and performing distinct works. (..) "The God which fed me" and "the Angel who redeemed me" are each represented as possessed of what is peculiar to a divine person, and as standing on the same footing with the true God. (∴) Divine works are ascribed to each. (::) They are mentioned as the object of divine worship and as the source of blessing. Jacob invokes a blessing from the three. But the true God is the only object of worship —the only being to whom prayer may be addressed. We nowhere read of the Old Testament saints praying to or invoking blessings from any except God. As if Jacob had said, Let him who is the fountain of blessing bless the lads. No creature can effectually bless them. The other two, therefore, whom Jacob mentions are really divine persons.

This is confirmed by Scripture which describes God the Father as the leader, the teacher, or him before whom our fathers walked—the Son of God as the Göel, the Angel who redeemed,—and God who is the author of all illumination, sanctification, and comfort, as the Holy Spirit who furnishes us with spiritual food and feeds us there-

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with. Isaiah (lxiii. 7–10) celebrates the loving-kindness of God manifested in former days to the Israelites, and expressly mentions not only God but "the angel of his presence" who bare and carried them and introduced them into the promised land, and his holy Spirit whom they vexed, and who "turned to be their enemy"—three distinct persons under three distinct names, and standing in different relations. One is called the angel of Jehovah's presence, and by the relation implied in that name is distinguished from Jehovah whose angel he is—the other is called his holy Spirit, and by the relation implied in that name is distinguished from Jehovah whose Spirit he is. They are not, therefore, one and the same with Jehovah, but distinct from him. But they are not only distinct—they are also divine persons. This is evident from the divine works ascribed to them. It is said of the angel of his presence that he bare and carried the people, and of the holy Spirit that they sinned against him and that he turned to be their enemy. Neither of these things can be affirmed of any but God, as may be shewn from the harmony of Scripture. In addition to these passages, there are others which, though not furnishing such clear proof, tend to strengthen the argument.

David says, (2 Sam. xxiii. 2, 3,) "The Spirit of the Lord spake by me, and his word *was* in my tongue. The God of Israel said, the Rock of Israel spake to me," &c. He mentions here three persons marked by distinct names, from whom he received a revelation, the Spirit of the Lord, the God of Israel, and the Rock of Israel, by which last name the Messiah is called, Deut. xxxii. 18.

In Ps. xxxiii. 6, David says "by the word of the Lord were the heavens made and all the host of them by the breath of his mouth"—assigning to each a distinct work. In Gen. i. 1, 2, it is said that "God created the heaven and the earth," *i. e.* by his word, and that his Spirit "moved upon the face of the waters." The prophet Haggai mentions three persons, Hagg. ii. 4, 5. Remember now thy creator, says Solomon,—in the original, creators, Eccl. xii. 1. "Thy maker (makers) is thine husband," Is. liv. 5. God, in creating man, is introduced as speaking in the plural number, "Let *us* make man," Gen. i. 26. These passages confirm the meaning we affix to the quotation from the Psalms. We may only further refer to the passage in which the Messiah is represented as saying, "the Lord God and his Spirit hath sent me," Is. xlviii. 16. Here, also, three persons are distinctly mentioned.

The passages in the New Testament in proof of this doctrine are still more numerous and explicit.

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Matth. xxviii. 19. Here our Lord commands his apostles to baptize all nations in the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. Three persons are enumerated in this passage under different names. These names are personal and distinct, for otherwise the Father would be the same person with the Son, and the Son the same with the Spirit. It is, besides, a mark of personal distinction, that the apostles baptized in the name of each,—in the name of the Son and of the Holy Spirit as well as of the Father. They are not only placed in the same series, but they are mentioned in such a way that the apostles must baptize into the name of each. To be baptized into the name of a person implies that that person is divine. He must, therefore, be an object of worship. He must also be a person. There is no such thing as baptism into the name of an attribute. Nothing, therefore, can be more certain than that there are here three distinct persons called by distinct names.

It is evident, too, that these persons are divine, because they are associated with one another, and are placed on the same footing. And, therefore, if one of them be a divine person, so must the others; —the Holy Spirit and the Son must be considered as divine persons. It is commanded, besides, that we be baptized into the name of them all. But baptism is not administered in the name of a creature. Paul rejects this as absurd, 1 Cor. i. 13–15. *To be baptized into the name of any one* does not mean, as Socinians say, to be baptized only by his authority but to be consecrated to him by baptism, and to be in subjection to God—to be devoted, therefore, to his service and obedience and faith. Vitringa, in his Observationes Sacræ, has shewn that this is the meaning of the phrase, and that Christ would not have enjoined the administration of baptism in his own name and in that of the Holy Spirit if he had not been along with the Spirit a partaker of the divinity of the Father.

John xv. 26. In this passage our Lord is speaking of the Spirit whom the Father promised, "When the Comforter is come whom I will send to you from the Father, even the Spirit of truth which proceedeth from the Father." It is universally admitted that the Father from whom he proceeds and the Son who sends him are distinct persons. But the Spirit himself who proceeds and is sent is also a real person. For, besides being called the Spirit, he is said to be the Comforter which is still more the name of a person. He is called, besides, an advocate—he is said to be sent by the Father and to be sent by the Son—he is styled, moreover, the Spirit of truth; not therefore an attribute only as truth is but the author and

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teacher of truth. He testifies of the Son. We have thus various marks of personality. But they are also divine persons. This is certain in regard to the Father, and in regard to the Spirit the same thing is admitted by our opponents. It is said of him that he proceedeth from the Father, and this is a mark of his divinity. But if he be a divine person, it follows also that the Son who speaks here and who says I will send him—*i. e.* God must in like manner be God. A creature cannot send God. Christ, therefore, could not have said of himself that he would send the Spirit, if he had not been God.

1 Cor. xii. 4–6. Here the apostle is enumerating the authors of gifts and administrations. He says that "there are diversities of gifts but the same Spirit," that "there are diversities of administrations but the same Lord," and "diversities of operations but the same God." We have here again, God, the Spirit, the Lord, each under a different name —each represented as a cause, as an author—the Lord as the author of administrations—God as the author of operations, and the Spirit as the author of gifts. Now as the personality of the Spirit is principally called in question, we have in this passage unquestionable evidence of his being a person, because he is mentioned by a distinct name and has a distinct work ascribed to him. In the 11th verse it said, "But all these worketh that one and the self-same Spirit, dividing to every man severally as he will." Here absolute power also is attributed to him. The three belong to the true divinity because they are here presented as the authors of divine gifts and as distributing these gifts among men. Hence the Holy Spirit also is distinguished from the gifts.

2 Cor. xiii. 14. The apostolical benediction, which closes this epistle, is concluded in these words, "The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ and the love of God and the communion of the Holy Ghost be with you all." Here we have three distinct persons—the Lord Jesus Christ, God, and the Holy Ghost; because they have distinct personal names—distinct attributes and works are ascribed to them so that grace is in the Lord or from him as its cause—love is in God and by him poured also upon us—and we have fellowship with the Holy Ghost, *i.e.* we enjoy the blessings which he communicates to us. They must, therefore, be distinct persons to whom these distinct names and works are assigned. But we have here, besides, three really divine persons, for they are presented in the same order. Now in a benediction a created person cannot be associated with God; much less can he occupy the first place in a benediction as here,

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because the attributes and works which are ascribed to these persons cannot be ascribed except to the true God. A blessing, besides, cannot be invoked except in the name of God; because it implies the offering up of prayer to God by which the blessing is obtained. But God alone is the object of prayer. He alone is the fountain of all blessing. And therefore in this passage we have clear and unquestionable proof of the Trinity.

Rev. i. 4, 5. John, in the beginning of this book, prays for peace "from him which is, and which was, and which is to come, from the seven Spirits who are before his throne. And from Jesus Christ who is the faithful witness and the prince of the kings of the earth." Here we have the same proof as in the passage immediately preceding and, therefore, nothing farther need be added except this one point. Lest any should object to the expression seven Spirits, as if so many angels were meant, let it be considered that reference is made to one and the same Spirit. The seven Spirits are not angels. They are not so called in the whole of this book, nor can blessings be obtained from them, which yet the words in this passage imply. But they are called seven Spirits in relation both to the same number of Spirits mentioned in Isaiah xi. 2, and to the same number of churches, vials, trumpets, and seals of which we read in the book of Revelation. In reference to this also we find mention made of the Lamb slain as having seven eyes, and these are the Holy Spirit, Rev. v. 6. These are the passages generally adduced in proof of the doctrine of the Trinity from the New Testament; but there are still others which, however, do not furnish equally strong evidence with those to which we have adverted. We have omitted in particular the passage in 1 John v. 7, "There are three that bear record in heaven, the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost, and these three are one." And we have done so for two reasons.

First, because we cannot prove the genuineness of the passage. It is called in question by many, not only by those who directly deny it but also by some orthodox divines—as Bugenhagius and Luther himself in the beginning of the Reformation. Calvin gave no opinion on the subject. We have several reasons for questioning its genuineness.

(1.) All the rules of criticism, which are applicable to the determination of the genuineness of readings are against it. (2.) In none of the manuscripts either the ancient or those immediately preceding the fifth century, and in none of the Latin manuscripts executed before the discovery of the art of printing, is this passage to be found.

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This is admitted by Bengelius and proved at considerable length by Mill. (3.) No ancient version, the Syriac, Vulgate,* old Italic, or any of the oriental versions which are considered ancient (with the exception of the more recent Armenian) contains this passage. (4.) None of the Greek or Latin Fathers previous to the sixth century quote it. It is found, indeed, among the works of Athanasius in the controversy which he had with Arius in the council of Nice. But learned men agree and the most recent Benedictine edition† proves that the treatise referred to is spurious. Jerome in his prologue to the Canonical Epistles says that the passage has been omitted by unfaithful translators, but Mill has shown that the prologue is spurious. None of the ancients appealed to this passage in proving the doctrine of the Trinity. All these circumstances warrant us in concluding that it is of exceedingly doubtful authority. (5.) We may easily account for its introduction into the text. The scribes were in the habit of writing on the margin of the 8th verse (and in many manuscript copies the marginal words are found) there are three that bear record, the Father, the Son, and the Spirit; and nothing was more easy than that this passage should have found its way into the place which it now occupies. (6.) The words as they stand cannot easily be defended, and scarcely give a tolerable meaning. For why are there three who bear record in heaven?—is their testimony needed there? It was superfluous, besides, to men tion the Father, the Son, and the Spirit, as in the 6th verse the apostle had spoken only of the Spirit and water and blood, "This is he that came by water and blood, *even* Jesus Christ. . . . And it is the Spirit that beareth witness." But what does he mean when he says in the 7th verse there are *three* that bear record, &c.? Other reasons might be given for calling in question the authority of this passage if we were inclined now to discuss the point. But our design does not allow us to do so. Those who wish further information may consult Mill, Bengelius, and a more recent writer, Wetstein, who on this subject has carried off the palm from all the others.

In the *second* place we have not adduced this passage because even although its genuineness could be proved, it cannot be shewn to refer to unity of essence. The words "these three are one" must have reference to unity of testimony, because this is the point treated

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* Our author must mean the copies of the Vulgate which existed prior to the tenth century for in the great majority of the manuscripts of this version which were made after that date the disputed passage is found.

† Athanasii (S.) opera, gr. et lat. opera et stud. (B. de Montfaucon) monach. ord. S. Benedicti. Paris, 1698.

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of by the apostle in this passage. There are three in the witness bearing, three who confirm one testimony.

We leave the passage, therefore, in its own place, and will give no decision concerning it. We do not stand in need of it in proving the Trinity, because we have other passages much more clear and decided. It does not furnish clear and certain proof, and therefore in controversy with opponents should be omitted. The remarks now offered may suffice for the general exposition and proof of this doctrine.

CHAPTER X.

THE TRINITY.

SPECIAL EXPOSITION—UNITY OF THE THREE PERSONS—NUMERICAL AND SPECIFIC UNITY—DISTINCTION OF PERSONS—MODE AND ORDER OF SUBSISTENCE—MODE AND ORDER OF OPERATIONS.

We shall now proceed to the *special* exposition, and as before

1. Explain.
2. Prove.

The special exposition has to do with the unity of the three persons, and with the distinction between them. We say that the three are one and therefore we must explain in what sense they are one and in what sense they are three.

In regard to the unity of the three persons, we observe (1) That it is a unity of dignity and worship. Thus it is said "that all *men* should honour the Son even as they honour the Father. He that honoureth not the Son honoureth not the Father which hath sent him," John v. 23. (2.) That it is a unity of love and affection, by which they are joined to each other. The Father and the Son are held forth to us as an example in this respect "that they all may be one; as thou, Father, *art* in me, and I in thee," John xvii. 21. (3.) That it is a unity of will and of operations; so that the three persons uniformly agree in this respect and will and act alike; "what things soever he (the Father) doeth, these also doeth the Son likewise," John v. 19. (4.) That it is a unity of attributes and perfections which constitute the divine nature. Of these all the persons partake —such as eternity, simplicity, omnipotence, &c. But these are

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not enough, and therefore we add (5.) That it is a unity of essence. This is the source and origin of the unities already mentioned. It implies that the three persons possess one and the same essence, and that all the other kinds of unity spring spontaneously from it. That there is such a unity is plain because (.) It is expressly said that they are one, "I and *my* Father are one," John x. 30. The Father is said to be in the Son and the Son in the Father, John xiv. 10. (..) The Spirit is said to know the things that are in God, as the spirit of a man knoweth the things which are in him, 1 Cor. ii. 11. (∴) The Son is called the perfect image of God, "the brightness of his glory, the express image of his person," Heb. i. 3, so that he who sees the Son sees the Father, John xiv. 9. (::) The unity of God cannot remain entire unless the three persons have the same essence; for if this essence be divided and scattered there will be three Gods and not one God. But there are three persons and one God, and therefore they must each possess undividedly the same divine essence.

Although we can scarcely explain this unity, we may say, however, that it is more intimate than that which is *specific*, and in opposition to which we are accustomed to call it *numerical*. We do not say that this word conveys a correct and clear idea of the unity of the Trinity, but we employ it because it is usual to do so.

In regard to the nature of this *numerical* unity and its difference from *specific* we are at a loss to define it. Yet we may give some general idea of it. In *specific* unity each of the three persons possesses his own separate and distinct essence, each of them is as it were a separate substance. Thus, for example, when we speak of three men or three angels, we mean that they have a specific unity of essence; whereas in that to which we now refer each of the three persons has not his own peculiar but one and the same essence. In *specific* unity, again, each of three persons has his own particular mode of thinking and willing, as three different men have; but in *numerical* unity the three divine persons have not. In *specific* unity, also, three persons are conscious only of their own individual thoughts and operations and become acquainted with those of each other only by their being communicated to them; whereas, in this unity, the three divine persons know by consciousness the thoughts and volitions of each other, they have what the ancients called *mutual manifestation*. The Son knows the thoughts of the Father, because he knows his own which are the same as those of the Father; and so does the Holy Spirit, for "the things of God knoweth no man,

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but the Spirit of God," 1 Cor. ii. 11. In *specific* unity, moreover, three persons may be said to be first one thing and then another, because in each there is a different and distinct essence, but in this unity it can only be said that they are first one person and then another, because the persons only are distinct, not their nature and essence. This is all that we can say on this subject although the idea which we can form of it is far from being distinct. A distinct idea we cannot have, for the subject is a mysterious one and is the object of faith rather than of understanding.

As, in respect of their essence the persons in the Godhead are one, so, in respect of their persons they are three. This distinction of persons has reference either to their subsistence or to their distinct operation. In regard to the former, we say that they have each their own proper and distinct subsistence, *i.e.*, that they are different persons and must not be confounded with one another. Each, we say, has really and truly a distinct subsistence of his own in virtue of which the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit subsist each in himself. This distinction is not to be apprehended by reason, it is not agreeable to our mode of conceiving things. Nor is it only a distinction in their mode of being, because this applies only to one and the same person and is not therefore a personal distinction; but it is nevertheless a true and real distinction if we consider it, that is to say, as referring not to their nature but to their subsistence. This personal distinction is greater however than that which is applicable to modes of being—for modes imply one subject—one and the same person. The distinction of persons, therefore, of which we now speak, cannot be compared with that just mentioned, because we would then fall into Sabellianism and deny a real personality. The three persons, then, are not three modes of being, but three real subsistences such as the word person signifies —that is, beings endued with reason, understanding, and will.

From this it follows that in respect of their operations, each of the three subsistences has his own proper actings, that is to say, as far as his person not his nature is concerned. If this be not admitted, the plan of salvation cannot be understood, the manifestation of the Son in the flesh and the satisfaction which he rendered to the Father cannot be explained. In virtue of their distinct personality, therefore, the three persons must also have their distinct operations.

We have said that the three persons have their own peculiar mode and order of subsisting and acting. The *mode* of subsisting peculiar to the three persons is not absolute but in relation to one another; for otherwise there would not be the unity which as we have already said

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characterises the persons in the Godhead. Originally there is only one God, and therefore the other persons must be from him in the manner of their subsistence. We have thus the first person who subsists absolutely and originally from himself and who is the principal of the others. This person is called the Father, and the name itself indicates what we have said concerning him. For he is the fountain of Deity "of whom are all things," 1 Cor. viii. 6. And hence he is usually called, by way of eminence, *Deus* and Θεὸς, John i. 1. The other two persons are from the Father by his participation of essence with them, not that they have subsistence in the same essence from themselves, but that the divine essence originated with the Father, and was produced in the Son and the Holy Spirit, and that the subsistence of the Son and of the Spirit in the same essence is with the Father.

But in this matter the two persons have what is common and what is peculiar. They have what is common, for they have received from the Father subsistence in unity of essence, or what is commonly called communication of essence. Thus our Lord said, "As the Father hath life in himself so hath he given to the Son to have life in himself," John v. 26. In this respect, also, the Son is called the "brightness of the Father's glory," Heb. i. 3. And the Spirit is said to proceed from the Father, John xv. 26.

They have also that which is peculiar to them, and in which they differ from each other. They differ in the order of communication, the Son being prior and the Spirit posterior, yet not, let it be supposed, in regard to time. They differ also in the manner of communication—the Son being immediately from the Father, but the Spirit mediately by the Son from the Father and the Son, as we hold with the Latin church. A difference of opinion on this subject arose at an early period between the Greek and Latin fathers (the former of whom maintained that the Spirit proceeded from the Father alone) and has continued to the present day. Of this controversy we have spoken at length in our Ecclesiastical History.* Scripture styles the Holy Ghost the Spirit of the Son as well as of the Father, Gal. iv. 6. Our Lord intimated the same thing to his Apostles when he breathed on them and said "Receive ye the Holy Ghost," John xx. 22. The Spirit, therefore, must be from the Father and from the Son. There is also a difference in the mode of communication– the Son being

* Institutiones Historiæ Ecclesiæ, Vol iii. pp. 175, 353 581, 687.

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from the Father by *generation*, Ps. ii. 7; and the Spirit by *procession*, John xv. 26. This difference, however, no mortal can understand or explain. We can form no idea of it. It is and will always be a profound mystery. Some, perhaps, may say, that generation is a mode of communication by which the power of communicating is transferred to the person begotten, so that the Spirit is not only from the Father but also from the Son who is the perfect image of the Father, and that the other mode or procession is by spiration in which case there is no transference, as in the former, of the power of communicating. As we have already said, however, we can form no correct idea of the matter; and it is our wise and becoming course to restrain from speculation, and to avoid prying into a mystery which it is impossible for us to solve.

In regard to the attributes or manner of this communication the following particulars may be stated.

The manner of the divine subsistence is natural and not arbitrary or depending on the will of God; for in that case there would not be unity of essence in the three persons, but God would be a compounded being. If any one ask, however, how this manner of subsistence in God is natural, we confess we do not know, and have no idea of it. But still as the nature of God does not admit of composition of accidents or of the absence of any thing that is necessary to his being, it follows that the manner of his subsistence is natural and necessary.

The manner of the divine subsistence is natural not arbitary. The Son of God is naturally from the Father, and the Spirit naturally from the Father and the Son, and therefore the manner of their subsistence must also be natural.

The manner of this subsistence is absolutely eternal, without any actual or conceivable beginning on the part of the Son and of the Spirit—not as if the Father after the lapse of a certain time produced the Son, but the Son is eternal and existed from the same moment with the Father. The mode of subsistence, being as we have said natural and necessary, is also eternal, because there is nothing pertaining to the nature of God which is not so. And therefore as the Son partakes of the nature of God, and as there is no knowledge of the Father without the knowledge of the Son, it follows that the mode of his subsistence is eternal.

The manner of this subsistence is perfect and belongs to the perfection of the divine nature. We cannot understand how or why this should be, but it follows from what we have already said.

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It is moreover very simple. Nothing is thereby added to God, because the persons are not different in nature, but are partakers of one and the same nature so that one and the same essence subsists in the three.

The *order* of subsistence may be easily understood from what has been said. According to this order, the Father is first, the Son, second, the Holy Spirit, third. The Father, as has been stated, is originally from himself, the Son, immediately from the Father, and the Holy Spirit mediately by the Son from the Father and the Son. This is a natural and necessary order in which the first place is given to the Father, not, however, in respect of essence, but in respect of subsistence. Only there is no subordination, on this account, no subjection on the part of the other persons. The Father is not greater, the Son less, and the Holy Spirit least; for there is perfect unity of essence,—in respect of that essence they are all equal. The Son naturally is from the Father but he is not on that account, inferior to him, or posterior in being. For this order relates not to essence but to the mode of subsistence. Christ indeed says, "My Father is greater than I," John xiv. 28, not, however, in respect of his divine nature, power, dignity and glory, but in respect of divine dispensation and arrangement—in respect of his human nature, not in his being from the Father, but in his being mediator between God and man. The same holds true of the mode and order of the subsistence of the Holy Spirit.

As all the persons of the Godhead have their own proper subsistence and mode of being, so also they all have their distinct operations and personal manner of acting, so that what the Father does cannot be said to be done by the Son. Although they are spoken of as performing the same works, yet personally and subsistentially they do not, otherwise the Father might have been called both the Son and the Father. Neither in this case could the subsistences have been called distinct persons, for a person is an intelligent, willing, and active being. There are three such persons in the Godhead, therefore they have each their own power of acting and operating. But as they have their particular mode and order of subsistence, they have also their particular mode and order of working, and on this rests, as we shall see, the economy or arrangement between the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, of which we shall afterwards speak. According to this arrangement the Father works in himself and is first in order in working. Of him, Paul says, are all things, nor can the Son do any thing but what he sees the Father do, John v. 19. In any

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work, therefore, a certain priority is to be ascribed to the Father, according to which he begins the work, the Son executes it, and the Holy Spirit perfects it. It belongs to the Father to decree, to the Son to execute, and to the Spirit to consummate and to apply.

We have said that the names by which the three persons are called in Scripture are the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit.

The first person is called in the whole of Scripture the Father, by way of eminence, *Deus* and ὁ θεὸς with the article to indicate a personal distinction. But he is so called because he is originally God and has being in himself, from whom are the Son and the Holy Spirit; because he is the foundation of all the divine works in nature and grace, by whom all things were decreed, and who, as we shall see in the proper place, laid the foundation both of the creation and recovery of man, and because, moreover, he protects the rights of the Godhead, as is evident from his requiring satisfaction by the Son as surety, and from his justifying the believing sinner for the sake of Christ and of the obedience which he rendered.

The second person is called the Son in relation to the Father as the first person, and, as we shall see, his first begotten, his only, his beloved Son. Thus he is said to have been begotten, Ps. ii. 7—a term which must certainly be understood not figuratively or metaphorically, but in its true and proper signification. It denotes generation properly so called, that is, the communication, of essence, and in this respect, the Son is said to have life from the Father, John v. 26. The relative names of Father and Son properly imply this; for they comprehend the communication, as we said before, of the same essence. He is the Son of God according to the Spirit of holiness, Rom. i. 4. He is called the Spirit of God, because he is from God and partakes of his essence. Hence also he is called the Branch of the Lord, Is. iv. 2, and the Branch absolutely, Zech. vi. 12; and the λόγος, the word of God, John i. 1; because he is naturally from God and is, as it were, the breath of God. He is said, moreover, to be in the bosom of the Father, John i. 18, and to be the express image of the Father's person, Heb. i. 3.

The third person is usually called the Holy Spirit, a word properly signifying breath or wind, John iii. 8. Metaphorically, however, it is taken in another sense, and denotes every thing that bears resemblance to wind, which is invisible and powerful in its effects—any spiritual substance, whether created or uncreated. In this latter sense we understand the word. By metonyme again it has various acceptations, and is taken both *causally* for the uncreated divine sub-

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stance itself, and *efficiently* both for the effect instead of the cause, and for the subject instead of the adjunct—first, because the benefits conferred by the Spirit are called the Spirit, and secondly, because a man who is endued with spirit is called a spirit, 1 John iv. 6.

We understand the Spirit therefore to be an uncreated divine substance and the cause of the benefits and blessings both of nature and of grace, and to be thus a divine person. He is so called, because he is naturally from God by spiration, so that he has proceeded from him as the breath from us.

In entering upon the particular or special proof there are three points to be attended to.

I. That which relates to unity of essence.

II. That which relates to personal subsistence.

III. That which bears upon the relative mode of subsistence by which the Son and the Holy Spirit are from or of the Father.

I. In regard to unity of essence. We say that the divine essence is common to the three persons, that is, that the same essence belongs to them all. It is not necessary to prove this in regard to the Father, for all acknowledge him to be the true God. But it is necessary to do so in as far as it concerns the Son and the Holy Spirit.

CHAPTER XI.

DIVINITY OF CHRIST.

SOURCES OF PROOF—CHRIST CALLED GOD—OBJECTIONS REFUTED—DIVINE PERFECTIONS AND ATTRIBUTES ASCRIBED TO CHRIST—SCRIPTURE PASSAGES—OBJECTIONS—DIVINE WORKS—OBJECTIONS.

The ordinary and proper proofs of the divinity of Christ are derived, I. from the name given to him, II. from the attributes ascribed to him, III. from the works ascribed to him, and IV. from the worship enjoined to be rendered to him.

I. A proof is drawn, and rightly so, from the proper names given to Christ, because Scripture has been careful in its application of them, and because they are the signs which suggest a distinct idea of the objects to which they are applied. Hence he must be the

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true God who is called in Scripture by the divine name. In order that this argument may have all the greater force, we shall adduce those passages in which Christ is called God, and press and establish the proof drawn from the application of this name to him.

Our opponents, and Socinians in particular, admit generally that Christ is called God in Scripture, but not in all the passages in which we say that he is; and therefore we must examine them in their order.

I. "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God," John i. 1. We hold, as the connection of this passage clearly shews, that by the Word is meant God. The subject, indeed, is placed last, but it is plainly intimated that the divine name is meant to be appropriated to the Logos. This is admitted by Socinians; although Artemon, the author of a book entitled *initium Evangelii Johannis restitutum*, has altered the reading of the passage, and contrary alike to the connexion of the words and the style of John has substituted θεοῦ ἦν ὁ λόγος for θεὸς ἦν ὁ λόγος.

This reading, however, has no authority to rest upon either of ancient manuscripts or of the testimony of any of the Fathers. Artemon proves indeed from the Fathers but without their authority, in the absence of which it is unlawful, in a matter of such importance, to make any change in the text.

In that case John would have said nothing extraordinary, for it had been clearly enough expressed in what went before. The Word, he tells us, was *with* God,—of what use was it to repeat that the Word was *of* God? If such had been his meaning, besides, he would have again employed the article, and said τοῦ Θεοῦ ἦν ὁ λόγος, whereas his words are Θεὸς ἦν ὁ λόγος. He omits the article, for the purpose of making a distinction between the persons, and of preserving his readers from confounding the Word with God. We conclude, therefore, that Christ is here called God.

2. When Thomas was convinced of the reality of our Lord's resurrection from the dead, he exclaimed, "my Lord, and my God," John xx. 28. These words, the Socinians say, were addressed to God the Father, and are expressive on the part of Thomas of that feeling of astonishment which the circumstances in which he was placed awakened within him, as if he had said, "O my God! what do I see?" In their opinion, therefore, it was not a confession of his faith in the divinity of Christ, but only an expression of wonder

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directed to God, caused by a conviction of the reality of what he formerly doubted and disbelieved.

But this objection is excessively absurd, and therefore some even of the Socinians themselves discard it and admit that Christ in this passage is Thomas's Lord and God. When Thomas says not only "my God" but "my Lord," it is very evident that the once incredulous but now convinced disciple speaks expressly of Christ. Christ himself, moreover, declares that Thomas did make a confession of his faith in himself. "Because thou hast seen me," he says, "thou hast believed," thus admitting that, in what Thomas had said, there was a reference to himself. Being now assured, by the evidence afforded to him, of the reality of Christ's resurrection, Thomas was led to entertain more exalted views of his person, and to acknowledge that he was indeed a divine person.

3. Acts xx. 28. In this passage Paul admonishes the elders of Ephesus to "feed the flock, the church of God, which he had purchased with his own blood." We cannot understand by God here God the Father, as Socinians maintain, but God the Son; because it is added, as a mark of distinction, that he purchased the church with his own blood—a phrase which cannot in any sense be employed concerning the Father, but which is applicable exclusively to Christ and is usually so applied. But it is said that the words τοῦ Θεοῦ should be rendered τοῦ κυριοῦ. The Fathers, however, and all the manuscripts, although they add κυριοῦ, express no doubt as to the correctness of the words τοῦ Θεοῦ.

4. Rom. ix. 5. Here Christ is said to have come of the fathers, as concerning the flesh; but it is added "who is over all, God blessed for ever." In these words, say the Socinians, we have an ascription of praise to God—who, and not Christ, is called blessed for ever. But, if we examine the context of the passage, we will find that such an interpretation is inadmissible. The words ὁ ὢν belong to the subject mentioned in the preceding clause, as in Matt. vi. 9, "Our Father which art (ὁ ὢν) in heaven." Now Paul had made mention of Christ immediately before, and therefore ὁ ὢν refers to the same person. The restrictive clauses besides, "the fathers of whom" and "as concerning the flesh" would have been useless unless the apostle had intended to add something higher; for the very fact of his employing these clauses shews that he meant to convey the idea that in Christ there was something more than his descent from the fathers or his human nature. This could be nothing else than his divine nature, and therefore he properly calls him God blessed for

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ever. In another part of this Epistle (i. 3) Christ is said to be of "the seed of David according to the flesh," a phrase denoting his human nature, and to be "the Son of God with power according to the spirit of holiness," (verse 4) a phrase denoting his divine nature and equivalent to that which occurs in the passage we have been considering —"God over all blessed for ever." There is still another interpretation adopted by Artemon and afterwards by Crellius. The reading proposed is a trifling alteration on the words, but it seriously affects the meaning. Ὁ ὢν, it is said, should be read ὢν ὁ, "of whom," &c. As we have in the former part of the verse ὢν ὁ Χριστός, &c. of whom is Christ according to the flesh, precisely in the same way have we here ὢν ὁ Θεὸς εὐλογητος, &c. of whom, of the Jews, namely, God over all be blessed for evermore. But this reading is supported by no authority. It is besides unnecessary; for the apostle had already sufficiently pointed out the privileges of the Israelites—and according to this reading would have added nothing extraordinary. Therefore Christ is called "God blessed for ever."

5. 1 Tim. iii. 16. On this passage we have spoken more at length elsewhere,* and have vindicated the reading of the name God. Socinians, indeed, have recourse to various readings and substitute ὃς or ὁ for Θεὸς, which is countenanced by some of the manuscripts and also by the Latin Vulgate. This change has been adopted by some of the Fathers who yet understand that God is spoken of—as thus, *which* or *who* was manifest in the flesh for the mystery of godliness.

The Greek Fathers are all in favour of Θεὸς. And the epithets employed require that a rational subject be meant to whom they apply. For it cannot be said of a mystery of godliness that it was manifest in the flesh. It is spoken peculiarly of the Son. As in another passage we read the Word was made flesh, so here as God he was manifest.

6. 1 John v. 20. John having said in this passage, "we are in him that is true," that is, in the Son of God, adds, "this is the true God and eternal life." Socinians deny that Christ is to be understood here, and say that by the true God is meant God the Father. But we reply in the first place, that God is spoken of in immediate connexion with the Son, and in the second place that the attribute of eternal life is

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* Exercitationes de vera Christi divinitate, ex locis Actæ xx. 28; 1 Tim. iii. 16, &c. Leovardiæ, 1755.

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added. It also suits the design of the passage that the Son should here be positively the true God. For the apostle says that we are in the true God because we are in the Son. The Son, therefore, must be the true God, otherwise fellowship with him would not be fellowship with the true God. He does not mean to say that the Father is the true God—this followed necessarily—but he says that we are in him that is true—in the Son, and inasmuch as we are in the Son, we are in the true God. The Son, therefore, is the true God. This is what the apostle behoved to affirm and what he has affirmed in the words, "This is the true God and eternal life."

7. Titus ii. 13. Christ is here called "the great God." The passage is a very remarkable one. The apostle says, "Looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ, *τοῦ μεγάλου θεοῦ καὶ σωτῆρος ἡμῶν*. By God the Socinians understand the Father and distinguish him from our Saviour. But improperly so, For (1.) mention is made of his appearance in the last judgment, when we know the Son and not the Father will appear in glory. (2. The article *ὁ* not being repeated shews that the apostle's statement refers to one and the same person. If by the Saviour another were meant besides God, then the article which is placed before *μεγαλου* would have been repeated; but its being used only before this word proves that it refers both to God and to our Saviour. The great God and the Saviour are connected without the article—thus intimating that the two are one and the same.

8. Heb. iii. 4. In this passage, also, Christ is called God. "Every house," says the apostle, "is builded by some *man*; but he that built all things is God." Christ is presented to our notice as the builder of the house (verse 3.) "This *man* was counted worthy of more glory than Moses, inasmuch as he who hath builded the house hath more honour than the house. For every house," &c.

Having now considered the argument for the divinity of Christ derived from the name of God, let us examine the objections which have been brought against it.

(1.) Although it is admitted by some that Christ is called God, yet the inference drawn from this that he is a divine person has been denied by them. The name, it is said, is sometimes employed in a general and less emphatic sense. Moses, for instance, is called a god to Pharaoh. This name they say is given to Christ, because he was so far superior to other men and was endowed with singular qualifications, and because he rejoiced in the power bestowed upon him of giving eternal life. He is in short God in such a sense that

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he is to be worshipped by us. Such is the opinion of our opponents. (.) This objection, however, is directly opposed to the style of Scripture, which in no instance gives the name of God to any person however exalted who is not really God. Moses, indeed, is so called; but as we have seen when treating of the name of God, only in reference to Pharaoh. In no other part of the sacred volume is any single person so called, for this would be contrary to its design, which is to withdraw us, as we have said, from the idea of a plurality of Gods. It cannot, therefore, afford us any pretext for making one God who is not God. This we say Scripture cannot do without leading us into error. Thus in 1 John v. 20, after the apostle had called Christ the true God, he immediately adds, "Little children, keep yourselves from idols." Paul in like manner makes mention of those who were called gods, but he sets in opposition to them the Father and the Son, 1 Cor. viii. 5, 6. Scripture, therefore, could not use this name at random—could not apply it except to the true God. (..) This argument is confirmed by the fact that Scripture not only calls Christ God, but also ascribes to him all the divine names without exception, and this would not have been done if he had not been truly God. He is styled Aleim, Ps. xlv. 7; Adonai, Ps. cx. 1; Adon, Mal. iii. 1; El Gibbor, Is. ix. 6; Jah, Ps. lxviii. 4. In the passage quoted from Isaiah (ix. 6) the prophet says that he saw the glory of God or of Jehovah. John in his Gospel (xii. 41) applies this to Christ. "These things said Esaias when he saw his glory"—the glory not of God the Father but of Christ "and spake of him;" because the Evangelist had immediately before made mention of Christ as the person to whom the prophet's language referred. The same prophet writes (xl. 3) "the voice of him that crieth in the wilderness, Prepare ye the way of Jehovah." We learn from Matthew's Gospel (iii. 1–3) that the voice mentioned by Isaiah was the voice of John the Baptist, who is represented as the herald and forerunner of the Messiah. The Messiah, therefore, is the true God—Jehovah. (∴) Scripture does not simply call Christ God, but it adds several epithets to shew that the name given to him must be understood as implying that he is really a divine person. He is styled, for instance, "the great God," Tit. ii. 13; "blessed for ever," Rom. ix. 5; "the true God," 1 John v. 20; "the Lord," Mal. iii. 1; "the Lord of glory," 1 Cor. ii. 8, in allusion to the expression in Ps. xxiv. 7; "one God" and "one Lord," 1 Cor. viii. 6, "one Lord" not excluding the Father and "one God" not excluding the Son. Christ, moreover, is called God in those passages, in which, by universal consent, reference is made to the true God, compare Ps.

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cii. 26 with Heb. i. 10. "The word was God." "All things were made by him." In contradistinction to his human nature he is called "God blessed for ever," Rom. ix. 5. There is no doubt, therefore, but that the argument derived from the name of God's being given to Christ is sufficiently strong to prove his divinity.

(2.) From the article's not being used with Θεὸς when applied to Christ it is supposed that he is inferior and subordinate to God. But we do find the article prefixed to Θεὸς in the confession which Thomas made, John xx. 28. The use of the article, however, or the omission of it, serves the purpose of marking out not divinity but personality. Ὁ Θεὸς is applied to the Father as the first person, and Θεὸς to the Son, not however as the second person, but as a partaker of the divine nature. This is clearly seen in John i. 1. "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God," πρὸς τὸν Θεὸν. He does not say, however, καὶ ὁ Θεὸς ἦν ὁ Λόγος, lest, by using the article, the Word should be confounded with God whom he had just mentioned or with the first person. If he had done so, we would have fallen into this erroneous opinion. By his omission of the article, therefore, he gives us to understand that the one is personally distinct from the other.

II. Another proof for the divinity of Christ is derived from the divine perfections and attributes being ascribed to him. And they are properly so. For they cannot be separated from the nature of God. They are his peculiar properties which tell us what his nature and essence are, and, therefore, the person who is represented as possessed of them must be the true God. But as on this point the doctrine of Scripture must be brought forward, and the argument unfolded in all its extent, the following things must be attended to.

Scripture ascribes divinity to Christ when it says, that the Godhead and all the fulness of the Godhead dwelt in him bodily, that is, in reality, not in appearance or in symbol as in the temple of old, Col. ii. 9. It declares, also, that Christ was "in the form of God, and thought it not robbery to be equal with God. But made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant" (Philip. ii. 6, 7), meaning by the expression "the form of God" that Christ considered that form not another's but strictly and properly his own.

Scripture ascribes a twofold nature to Christ—the flesh and the Spirit, Rom. i. 3, 4; ix. 5; 1 Pet. iii. 18. Now flesh in Scripture is used to signify human nature, as when it is said "the Word was made flesh," John i. 14. The Spirit, again, is employed to denote

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God and the divine nature which is abiding, stable, and self-acting, Is. xxxi. 3.

Thus also we read of "the spirit of holiness" (Rom. i. 4), according to whom Christ is proved to be the Son of God by the resurrection from the dead. He is said to be of the fathers "according to the flesh," and also to be "over all God blessed for ever," Rom. ix. 5.

Scripture teaches in more than one way that the Son is possessed of the same nature as the Father. It says that "the name" of God is in him (Ex. xxiii. 21), that is, the peculiar characteristic mark of God, by which he is distinguished from all other beings. He is also called the "presence" of God and the "angel of his presence," Ex. xxxiii. 15; Is. lxiii. 9, and the Son of God in a sense in which no other being is so called, Heb. i. 5. He is said to be equal with the Father. Our Lord himself expressly stated this to the Jews who found fault with him for laying claims to such a distinction. "I and *my* Father are one," John v. 18, 19; x. 30. He declared that he had the same life which the Father had, and that it was given to him by the Father, John v. 26. All, in short, that belongs to the Father belongs also to the Son, and he who hath seen the Son hath seen the Father, John xiv. 9.

All the attributes of God are ascribed also in Scripture to Christ the Son of God—such as, omniscience, omnipotence, absolute power, absolute original holiness, every description in short of grace and glory. He is said to know what is in man, John ii. 25; no man knoweth the Father, save the Son, Matt. xi. 27; he knoweth all things, John xxi. 17; he searches the reins and hearts, Rev. ii. 23, a perfection which God claims as exclusively his own, Ps. vii. 9; he is called "the Almighty," Rev. i. 8; in the exercise of his power "he is able to subdue all things unto himself," Philip. iii. 21. Essential holiness is attributed to him, Rom. i. 4; 2 Cor. xiii. 14; John i. 14.

But these attributes, it is objected, were communicated to Christ in the exercise of the grace and good pleasure of God, and do not prove therefore his divine essence. The objection, however, is groundless and absurd. For (1) God expressly declares that he will not give his glory to another, Is. xlii. 8. (2.) These attributes are the peculiar properties of the nature of God and are incommunicable. (3.) They presuppose an essence that is divine and infinite, because a finite being is incapable of receiving what is infinite, and therefore cannot partake of attributes the very idea of which involves infinitude.

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(4.) There would remain no distinction between God and the creature, if these attributes could be shared by another, and thus they would be confounded.

In regard to the eternity of Christ, it would be sufficient to prove, in opposition to the Socinians, that he existed before the Virgin Mary, for this they deny. But besides this let us demonstrate the special point that he existed from all eternity.

Scripture plainly shews that he existed before Mary. John the Baptist bears witness of him in these words, "he that cometh after me is preferred before me: for he was before me," John i. 15. He repeats the same thing when he speaks (verse 27) of the dignity of Christ. Although he was born after John, and was in one sense younger than he, yet John says, he "is preferred before me." A greater dignity belongs to him who in truth is not posterior but prior to me, because "he was before me."

Socinians, however, understand the words of the latter clause of the 15th verse, "he was before me," in the same sense as those that go before, "he is preferred before me" and as pointing out to us only the superior dignity of Christ to John. But this, we maintain, cannot be the case, because John would then be proving a thing by itself and conveying one and the same sentiment by different expressions. The latter of these clauses cannot be understood like the former as referring to Christ's dignity. For having said "he who cometh after me is preferred before me," that is, is more excellent and worthy, he gives the reason why, though coming after him, he is so preferred, namely, for "he was before me." But the ground of his superiority cannot be sought for in the superiority itself, and, therefore, must be sought for in his pre-existence. This interpretation alone is agreeable to the connexion of the passage and to the meaning of the phrase "who cometh after me." This phrase implies that the birth of Christ was posterior to that of John. When he says that Christ was before him, we must understand him to mean that, although Christ was born after him, he yet existed before him, that he did not begin to exist when he was born of Mary but that he was in existence before that time.

It is said also that he existed before Abraham. Our Lord himself asserted this, John viii. 58. "Abraham rejoiced to see my day, and he saw it and was glad," ver. 56. The Jews charged him with folly in saying that, although he was not yet fifty years old, he nevertheless lived in the time of the patriarch. Still he advances his claim and repels the objection of the Jews by maintaining that he was really

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before Abraham in such a sense that the patriarch may be said to have seen his day.

This expression, say Socinians, is to be understood mystically, that is, that before Abraham was the father of many nations, I was the light of the world and the Saviour of the Gentiles. We reply the words of our Lord are simple and follow as an independent proposition. That the Messiah was the light of the world before Abraham was the father of many nations has nothing to do with this passage. Christ would not, if this had been his meaning, have replied to the objection urged by the Jews, for they were speaking of his existence before Abraham. He must therefore shew in what sense Abraham could see his day; and so, when he says, "before Abraham was I am," the phrase must be understood as referring to his real existence. There is nothing, moreover, in the words to lead us to put upon them such a mystical interpretation. They have no meaning if they do not denote existence in the real acceptation of the term. Scripture declares that Christ came from heaven, and in the Gospel by John such an expression is frequently employed, John xvi. 28.

It is further said, in the way of objection, that Christ after his appearance in the world was taken up to heaven—at the time, namely, when he was in the desert and was assailed by the temptations of Satan—in order that he might be instructed in the knowledge of that divine truth which he was to make known to men. In this sense he said that he came from heaven. This is no new opinion, but its absurdity is such that we wonder how any one can for a moment entertain it. Scripture, which alone can be admitted as evidence in regard to such a translation to heaven, makes no mention of any thing of the kind. It explicitly states that he was in the wilderness, and that he was there tempted by Satan, Matt. iv. What necessity was there, besides, for his going to heaven? If it was with the view of producing in us a stronger conviction of the truth of his doctrine, then we must have other men to bear witness to the fact, or it must be distinctly recorded in Scripture. But there is no reason why he should be so carried up to heaven. Like other prophets he could have been instructed on earth. We conclude, therefore, that he came from heaven when he was born and was manifested among men—that he existed before his nativity.

It is evident from several passages that he existed before the beginning mentioned by Moses, and from these passages we infer his true and proper divinity. "In the beginning was the Word—All things were made by him," John i. 1, 3. This is the period referred to by

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Moses, when he says, "In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth," Gen. i. 1, that is the beginning of creation generally. But in this beginning Christ existed, for "the Word was with God." There was no being, therefore, at that time but God. But all things are said to have been made by the Word, and therefore the Word who is said to have been made flesh must be eternal, John i. 14. His eternity is spoken of in Ps. cii. 25, "Of old hast thou laid the foundation of the earth"—and this is applied to the Son, Heb. i. 10. He is called "the first-born of every creature" (Col. i. 15) and so born before all things, not as Arians say before created beings. As the first-born he is not ranked among the creatures but is excluded from them, and as the Son of God he is so called not only because he was before Mary but because he was from eternity, before the foundation of the world, and when there was no being but God.

Christ is also said to be omnipresent. This attribute, Socinians admit, belongs exclusively to God, and implies that he is in heaven and in every place, that he fills heaven and earth. "No man hath ascended up to heaven but he that came down from heaven, *even* the Son of man which is in heaven, John iii. 13." These words form part of our Lord's conversation with Nicodemus. "How shall ye believe if I tell you *of* heavenly things?" He wished to testify that which he had seen. He stated that he had come from heaven, and proved it by this that no one ascended to heaven but he who descended. But it may be said, perhaps, that he came from heaven in this sense that he left heaven. To prevent this supposition he says "the Son of man which is in heaven," ὁ ὢν, not who was, but who, at present, exists there. The same person, therefore, who was sojourning on earth and now conversing with Nicodemus, was, at the same moment, in heaven. He was both in heaven and on earth, and this is a clear proof of his real divinity.

The attribute of independence is ascribed to him. He is called "the first and the last," "Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the ending," Rev. i. 8, 17. He depends, therefore, upon none—he is before all—all things are from him. To restrict these words to the economy of grace is contrary to reason. First and last, beginning and ending, are epithets applied to God, as we frequently find in the prophecies of Isaiah (xli. 4; xliv. 6); and therefore we conclude that Christ is the true God, inasmuch as we find them applied to him.

III. The divine works that are ascribed to Christ furnish a third argument in favour of his divinity. And this is a strong argument, because effects bear witness to the cause by which they are produced,

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and cannot be in their nature superior to their cause. When works really divine, therefore, are ascribed to Christ, he must be God. As we have proved from effects produced the existence of God, so may we prove from the works attributed to Christ that he is the true God. But it may be worth while to adduce the statements of Scripture on this subject, and in doing so the following things must be attended to.

(1.) Scripture in general states that Christ did whatever the Father did, John v. 19. There is no work therefore done by the Father which may not also be said to be done by the Son—every effect which proves the existence of God may be attributed also to the Son, because "what things soever he doeth, these also doeth the Son likewise."

(2.) The miracles which Christ performed could be wrought only by God and for the promotion of the glory of God. Now he performed miracles, not as the prophets and apostles did, but by his own power and for the advancement of his own glory. While the prophets wrought their miracles by the divine power and for the divine glory, it is expressly said of Christ that divine "virtue" went out of him, Luke viii. 46, and that too for the manifestation of his own glory. John xi. 4, 40.

(3.) We must attend particularly to the resurrection of Christ and to his ascension into heaven. These are divine works and are ascribed to Christ. He is spoken of as having power to lay down his life and power to take it again, John x. 18. He himself says that he would go to the Father, that he would ascend up into heaven. "No man hath ascended up to heaven but he that came down from heaven," John iii. 13. "Destroy this temple and in three days I will raise it up," John ii. 19.

(4.) The work of human redemption from the guilt and power of sin with all the effects of that redemption which involve eternal life deserves especial notice, because it is peculiarly Christ's work and proves his divine nature. The apostle also says that it is specially the work of God, Acts xx. 28. The price of redemption is represented as being beyond the power of man to pay. It must therefore be a work performed by God who has power to deliver man from sin and to bestow upon him eternal life. Now redemption implies such a deliverance and such a gift. But this can be done only by God. The consequence of redemption teaches the same thing, for those who are redeemed are bound to render all obedience and as his peculiar people to worship him by whom they are redeemed. But this obedience and honour, as we shall afterwards see,

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are due only to God. We may add that Scripture everywhere teaches that the Redeemer is the true God, Is. xlv. 22.

(5.) Scripture ascribes to the Son of God the government and the judging of the whole world, and this is a clear proof of his divinity. "All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth," Matt. xxviii. 18. "The Father hath committed all judgment unto the Son," John v. 22. He is called παντοκρατωρ, the almighty ruler of the universe, a title which belongs only to God, who is the only Judge, the only King, Is. xxxiii. 22.

(6.) The work of creation is ascribed to Christ. This Socinians deny, and according to their hypothesis must deny. But Scripture teaches the doctrine with the utmost possible clearness. "In the beginning was the Word. . . . All things were made by him, and without him was not anything made that was made," John i. 1, 3. "All things were created by him and for him, whether visible or invisible," and "by him all things consist," Col. i. 16, 17. Compare Ps. cii. 26 with Heb. i. 10. See also 1 Cor. viii. 6.

According to Socinians, however, these passages refer not to the first and material, but to the second and spiritual creation which consists of the regeneration of the world and of the establishment of the church and kingdom of Christ, and which, in their opinion, he effected in his character as teacher by the proclamation of the word of grace and by the promise of eternal life. But, if the work of creation can be shewn to be Christ's it will prove his true divinity. Let us see, therefore, on which side the truth lies.

If we examine John i. 1, several proofs present themselves in favour of the material creation, but none in favour of the spiritual.

The Word is said to have been "in the beginning"—and that, with reference especially to the beginning mentioned by Moses, Gen. i. 1, both because the expression is employed without any restriction, and because otherwise it would be destitute of meaning. If it implied that Christ in the beginning was the founder of a spiritual kingdom or church when that kingdom had been founded, there would be no force we say in such a statement.

It is stated further that nothing was made without him. All things began to be by him. This cannot be understood as referring to the establishment of the economy of grace; because all things connected with it were not immediately done by him. Much was done by the apostles and by other preachers of the gospel, so that it cannot be said that nothing was done without him.

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The world, we read again, was made by him—the world which received him not and knew him not (ver. 10, 11), a statement which certainly has no reference to the setting-up of the new dispensation, inasmuch as the world so understood did receive him.

The Word, moreover, is said to have created all things before he was made flesh, for of the Word, by whom, according to the Evangelist, all things were made, it is declared that he was "made flesh," ver. 14. John therefore spoke in the preceding part of the chapter of the Word before his incarnation. This however could not be affirmed regarding the new but regarding the first creation of which he, as the Word, was the author.

We refer to another passage of Scripture in proof of the same doctrine.

All things are said to have been created by him "that are in heaven and that are in earth," Col. i. 16. Such an absolute form of expression as this is never made use of in regard to the regeneration of the world. When the latter is spoken of some epithet is always added, as, for example, a new heaven and new earth, a creating or being created anew, a being created to good works. Nor need we stumble at what the apostle says (Eph. iii. 9) that God "created all things by Jesus Christ;" for he is speaking in that passage not of the new and spiritual but of the first and material creation. This is evident from the design and connexion of his discourse. For he means to say that the mystery was from the beginning hid in God in his decree in Jesus Christ by whom all things were made,—that is to say, God manifested by Christ, by whom he made the world, that the decree was formed by him concerning the recovery of fallen man.

All things are said "to consist by him" and he is said to be "before all things." But there would be no meaning in such language as this, if it were meant that he existed before the new economy or dispensation.

Among the things created by him the apostle mentions "visible and invisible"—that is, thrones, powers, principalities, &c., which can in no way be understood as having any reference to the new or spiritual creation, and of which it cannot be said that they were in this sense ever created by Christ as the Saviour, seeing that they did not require to be so.

In the epistle to the Hebrews (i. 2) it is said that "the worlds were made by him;" yet the apostle says (xi. 3) "through faith we understand that the worlds were framed by the word of God," evidently meaning by this the material creation. He quotes also Ps. cii. 26,

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which unquestionably refers to the formation of the material universe and in the 10th verse applies the quotation to Christ.

In another of his letters (1 Cor. viii. 6) he says to us "there is but one God, the Father, of whom are all things . . . and one Lord Jesus Christ, by whom are all things." As all things are here said to be of God, so all things are said to have been created by him. But he had already stated that this was to be understood as referring to the material creation, and therefore the same creation must be meant when he speaks of Christ. It is thus a just conclusion which we draw, when we say that this work is ascribed to the Son and proves him to be the true God.

CHAPTER XII.

DIVINITY OF CHRIST AND OF THE HOLY SPIRIT.

DIVINE WORSHIP AND HONOUR ASCRIBED TO CHRIST—PROOFS—OBJECTIONS ANSWERED—DIVINITY OF THE HOLY SPIRIT—PROOFS—DIVINE NAMES, PERFECTIONS, WORKS, AND WORSHIP—PERSONALITY OF THE HOLY SPIRIT—PERSONAL NAMES AND ACTIONS ASCRIBED TO HIM.

The worship and honour which in Scripture are enjoined to be paid to Christ form another argument in favour of his divinity. Here, also, we must bring forward in all its extent the doctrine revealed in the word of God, before we proceed to urge and vindicate the argument by which it is established.

Now Scripture declares it to be the will of God that the Son should be worshipped and honoured. "Kiss the Son," Ps. ii. 12. "God also hath highly exalted him . . . that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow," Philip. ii. 9, 10. "Let all the angels of God worship him," Heb. i. 6. We find that saints and apostles of old did worship him, Matt. xiv. 33; Luke xxiv. 52; Acts vii. 59–60; 2 Cor. xii. 8. So did the whole church, Acts i. 24.

Scripture says that the Son is to be honoured equally with the Father, John v. 23, and that prayers for blessings are to be addressed to him as well as to the Father, 2 Cor. xiii. 14; 1 Thess. iii. 11, 12; Rev. i. 5.

Glory and honour are given equally to the Father and the Son, Rev. v. 13. The Father is represented as seeking the glory of the

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Son, John viii. 50; and this certainly cannot be spoken of in reference to any created being. Christ is called, "God blessed for ever," Rom. ix. 5. At the close of the epistles honour and glory are ascribed to him, Heb. xiii. 21; 2 Pet. iii. 18; Jude 25.

We are also baptized in the name of the Son, and thus bound to render him all worship, honour, and obedience, Matt. xxviii. 19. God bestows every blessing upon us in the name of Christ, but every one must see that this would not be the case if Christ were merely a creature.

Scripture teaches and enjoins us to put our trust in Christ, Ps. ii. 12; Rom. xv. 12; while at the same time it elsewhere calls him accursed who does not put his trust in God, Jerem. xvii. 5.

The Son of God, moreover, is represented as swearing by himself, and this none but God can do, Gen. xxii. 16; Is. xlv. 23; Philip. ii. 10—and swearing by himself in the character of God. This also is lawful and is done by the saints, Is. lxv. 16.

By carefully attending to what has just been said, we cannot but ascribe to Christ true divinity and acknowledge him to be the true God. But to strengthen our argument all the more, we subjoin the following considerations. (1.) God is jealous of his own glory—he expressly declares that he will not give it to another, Is. xlii. 8. He commands that He alone be worshipped, Matt. iv. 10. (2.) He cannot deny himself, and cannot therefore share with another what is exclusively his own. This would be to confess that he is not God alone. (3.) Scripture declares that all are guilty of idolatry who worship those who are, by nature, no gods, Gal. iv. 8; and Christ would not be God, if the Socinians are correct.

In like manner the apostle says that the Gentiles when they knew God, did not glorify him as God, because they gave to idols and to created things the worship and glory that were due to him alone, Rom. i. 23.

4. He who has no claim to an antecedent has no claim to the consequent, and *vice versa*. The consequent we are speaking of is religious worship and adoration. Now the antecedent is the divine nature, omniscience, all sufficiency, and the dependence of all things upon him who is so adored and worshipped. He who has not these divine attributes is not the object of worship.

Still Socinians have their objections and seek to evade the force of the argument, although they are not agreed among themselves. Some of them, as Franciscus David and others, maintain that Christ should not be worshipped. But Socinus himself and his followers

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denied this, and held that he should, although in consistency with their own hypothesis they ought to deny it.

Socinus and his disciples denied the inference that he is God, and made a distinction between a higher and a lower kind of worship. The former, they said, consists of worship properly so called and belongs exclusively to God. By the latter again they mean invocation and prayer for assistance, and this according to them is paid to Christ as Mediator in respect of the gifts and blessings which God gave to him to be bestowed upon men. They hold that it is lawful for us to ask these from Christ not as God, but as empowered by God to grant them. This is the only kind of worship which they say is due to Christ. They tell us, besides, that Christ under the Old Testament dispensation was not thus worshipped, and that after the last judgment he will not be so worshipped, but only while his Mediatorial office and the dispensation of its blessings continue. When these cease in the end of the world, the worship now rendered to him will also cease, because that worship is paid to him as being the dispenser of the blessings with which he has been entrusted.

Every one must perceive that this objection and this opinion are at variance with the doctrine of Scripture which we have already stated. For (1) it nowhere makes such a distinction—it places the Father and Son on a footing of equality—it never says that the worship due to Christ rests on his mediatorial office, on his having blessings committed to him by God to be conferred upon men, and that on this ground alone he is entitled to worship. It is always presupposed that the person deserving of being worshipped is possessed of supreme power of dispensation in all things—a power which belongs exclusively to God. (2.) Scripture gives no countenance to the distinction between a higher and a lower kind of worship in regard to the Godhead. There is no gradation, higher or lower, in regard to the persons. The whole soul must be subjected to God. All are required to love and worship him with the whole heart, and to render to him from whom alone cometh down every good and perfect gift the homage of all their powers. (3.) If there be such a distinction, why should not angels and glorified saints be also worshipped, seeing that the former especially have some share in bestowing blessings upon us, and, in a way which we cannot now understand or explain, make us fit to be partakers of these blessings which God has designed for us? Unquestionably, if this be the ground on which worship is rendered to him, the rest of the creatures should also share in it in respect of what has now been stated.

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(4.) Christ is to be worshipped not only because he is invested with the office of Mediator, but because he is a divine person. He is worshipped as being God and man, but that worship is rendered to him not in his human nature, or because of the work which he performs as Mediator, but because of his divine nature which he has equally with the Father. We conclude, therefore, that Christ is the true God.

It now remains that we treat of the divinity of the Holy Spirit, and, in doing so, we shall follow the same line of argument.

(1.) The names of God are given to the Holy Spirit. The instances of this are fewer than in the former case, because by him the Scriptures were dictated—in them he speaks and bears testimony especially to the Father and the Son. Yet passages are not wanting in which his own divinity is expressly asserted.

For example, Jacob, in blessing his sons, makes mention of three persons and from them invokes the blessing—"God before whom my fathers did walk—the God which fed me—the angel which redeemed me from all evil," Gen. xlviii. 15. David says, "the Spirit of the Lord —the God of Israel spake by me," 2 Sam. xxiii. 2, 3. Scripture is said to be given "by inspiration of God," 2 Tim. iii. 16; because the Spirit gave it, and holy men of old spake as they were moved by him, 2 Pet. i 21. He is said to have spoken to Isaiah, compare Is. vi. 8–10 with Acts xxviii. 25–27. Believers are called a holy temple, 1 Cor. iii. 16, 17, and why? because the Holy Ghost dwells in them, 1 Cor. vi. 19.

In one passage he is expressly called God and Lord. "Why," said Peter to Ananias, "hath Satan filled thine heart to lie to the Holy Ghost?—thou hast not lied unto men but unto God," Acts v. 3, 4. The Holy Ghost, therefore, must be God. The same person is referred to in the former and latter clause, otherwise there would have been no peculiar aggravation in the sin which Ananias had committed.

According to Socinians the rendering of this passage should be "thou hast falsified the Spirit" (mentitus es spiritum) or thou hast falsely asserted that thou hast the Spirit. But we reply that in this case there would be too wide a distance between the declaration of his sin and of its aggravation. Moreover, although it is true that here, as is often the case in Greek, *ψευσασθαί* is construed with the accusative, yet the force of the construction is not such as they represent it. The phrase denotes *to deceive the spirit*, for that is the meaning of *mentiri spiritum*, and not *falsely to boast that he had the Spirit*.

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He is called, moreover, the Lord. "Now the Lord is that Spirit," 2 Cor. iii. 17, inasmuch as he is one with God. Paul is speaking in this passage of the face of Moses which reflected such glory that he put a vail over it when he came near to the people, but removed it when he approached the presence of God. Now the apostle does not say that God is a Spirit, and the same Spirit to whom he here refers, but he says that the Spirit by whom he means a different person is the God called Jehovah. In this sense the expression is used with regard to Christ (1 John v. 20), he is "the true God," that is, the same with the true God. So in this passage "the Lord is that Spirit."

Divine perfections are ascribed to him—omnipresence, Ps. cxxxix. 7; omniscience, 1 Cor. ii. 10, 11; original perfect holiness, Is. lxiii. 10, 11; and almighty power, in the exercise of which he disposes of all events and dispenses all blessings according to his own pleasure, 1 Cor. xii. 8–10.

Divine works both in nature and in grace are attributed to him. Whatever is comely and excellent in the world is to be traced to him as its author. At its creation he moved upon the face of the waters, Gen. i. 2. By him all the hosts of heaven were made, Ps. xxxiii. 6. All those spiritual gifts and blessings which have a tendency to advance the well-being and perfection of man are, as regeneration, sanctification, preservation. Scripture teaches us, and such as we shall explain more minutely afterwards ascribed to him. All extraordinary miraculous gifts, too, are ascribed to him as their cause.

He is represented as the object of divine worship. He is but seldom spoken of as the direct object, because he is said to pray in us, and because the Father is economically the person to whom supplication is to be addressed; yet, as he dwells in the hearts of believers, he is there reverenced and worshipped, 1 Cor. iii. 16; Rom. viii. 11 (2) We are also said to be baptized in his name, Matt. xxviii. 19. (3) Our prayers are addressed to him as well as to the Father and the Son, 2 Cor. xiii. 14, Gen. xlviii. 15. (4) The sin against the Holy Ghost is a very heinous sin, Is. lxiii. 10, and is said to be unpardonable, Matt. xii. 31, 32.

We have thus proved that the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit partake each of real Godhead. And as there can be only one Godhead it follows that the Godhead possessed by them is the same, and that the Father, the Son, and the Spirit are one in essence.

We come now to prove their personal subsistence, that is, that the Father, the Son, and the Spirit have a really distinct personality or subsistence—such as we have already shewn.

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But we may shorten our demonstration of this point, because the question here is not regarding the Father and the Son but only regarding the Holy Spirit. Socinians deny that he is a real person or a distinct subsistence and hold that he is only an emanation from God—a certain influence exercised by him.

That the Spirit is a person may be proved

(1) From the personal names given to him. And we may properly appeal to the name Spirit by which throughout Scripture he is distinguished, and which is a personal name. Whether it be employed to denote the wind or the soul it always means a subsistence. And as the third person of the Godhead is so called, he must be a person. This proof is all the stronger if we observe that he is compared with such a subsistence as the word Spirit imports. Thus he is compared to the wind, John iii. 8. Like the wind, therefore, he must be a substance. He is also compared with our spirit, 1 Cor. ii. 11. And as the spirit of a man is a substance so must the Holy Spirit.

But he is called in Scripture not the Spirit simply but "the Spirit of holiness." He must therefore be a subject in whom holiness resides, Is. lxiii. 10. He is called the Spirit of truth, John xv. 26. His name *πνευμα*, though neuter, is construed with a pronoun in the masculine gender, and in this we have a proof of his personality, Eph. i. 13, 14, John xvi. 13. We find Greek writers, when they wish to indicate a person, joining the masculine article with a word in the neuter, as, *τα ἐθνα—αὐτους*, Matt. xxviii. 19.

He is called "the Comforter," and, in relation to Christ, *αλλος*, "another comforter" and "an advocate," names clearly proving that he is a distinct person. But, say Socinians, the word spirit is often used to denote an affection, a moral quality. Thus we read of the "spirit of love, the spirit of fear, the spirit of wisdom." In answer to this we say (1) That we have in these expressions the effect put for the cause. We are not to suppose however that Scripture always intended to speak figuratively of any thing relating to God and never in the ordinary and proper use of language. (2) That the usage of speech (*usus loquendi*) takes for granted the personality of the Spirit, a usage which had its origin in the ascription of all these affections to the Spirit as their cause: and therefore these very phrases prove the personality of the Spirit.

(3) That Scripture, in some passages, ascribes these affections and operations to the Spirit as their cause, 1 Cor. xii. 11. (4) That we are said to be baptized in his name, which can, in no way, be understood figuratively for an affection, as we have seen in our general proof for

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the Trinity. The evidence, therefore, derived from the names is incontrovertible.

All the attributes of a person are ascribed to the Spirit. He is said to be possessed of understanding and knowledge, 1 Cor. ii. 11, of will and unrestricted power to dispose of all things according to his pleasure, 1 Cor. xii. 11.

The actions of a person are attributed to him. He is represented as working both in nature and in grace. He produced all that is fair in creation—he made the host of heaven, Ps. xxxiii. 6. He is the author of all that is good in the soul of man—wisdom, prudence, love, reverence for God and for his word, all virtue, all consolation. He is said also to bear witness of the truth, to teach all things, to guide into all truth. The whole of Scripture is divinely inspired, because, as we have seen, it proceeds from the Spirit as its author.

We are said to be baptized in the name of the Holy Ghost, to grieve him and to sin against him, Is. lxiii. 10; Eph. iv. 30; Matt. xii. 31; all clearly proving that he is in reality a person. See the objections which have already been considered.

CHAPTER XIII.

THE TRINITY.

RELATIVE SUBSISTENCE OF PERSONS IN THE GODHEAD—PROOFS—NAMES OF THE PERSONS—REASONS—OPINIONS REGARDING THE SON—ARIANISM—SEMIARIANISM—SOCINIANISM—THE HOLY SPIRIT—HERESIES OF MACEDONIUS, NOETUS, PRAXEAS, AND SOCINUS—OPINIONS REGARDING MODE OF PERSONAL SUBSISTENCE—OBJECTIONS ANSWERED.

We have now to speak of the relative subsistence of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, the Son being from the Father by generation, and the Spirit from the Father and the Son by procession. This relative mode of subsistence is proved by the following arguments.

(1.) The unity of God cannot remain entire unless the original principle be one and unless there be unity of essence as we have shewn in a previous chapter.* But if the three divine persons have not this relative subsistence, there would be not one but three principles. Nor could there be one and the same divinity, for one

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* See Chapter ix.

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proof or foundation of this unity consists in this, that one partakes of the divine nature along with others. We cannot otherwise conceive three beings in possession of divinity and yet one divinity and one divine essence, because the only foundation of this in the number conceived is the participation of essence with others. They must therefore have a relative subsistence, if, as is the case, there be only one God.

(2.) Another proof is drawn from the fact that the order of subsistence and of operation necessarily requires a relation such as that of which we are now treating. For whence is it that there is in the order of subsistence a first, second, and third person? Why does Scripture say that the Father "is one God of whom are all things," and that the Son is "one Lord by whom are all things," 1 Cor. viii. 6? Why does it say that the Son doeth nothing except what he seeth the Father do, John v. 19;—that God created all things by the Son, Eph. iii. 9;—that God is the head of the Son, as the Son is the head of the Church, 1 Cor. xi. 3;—that the Son shall at length deliver up the kingdom which he received from the Father, 1 Cor. xv. 24? All these things necessarily require that there be a relative kind of subsistence between the persons. Otherwise that order would be arbitrary and dependent upon the will of God, and thus, if he had chosen, the Father might have been said to be of the Son as well as the Son of the Father. But this would have been completely to confound the persons. They must have therefore a mutually relative subsistence.

(3.) "As the Father hath life in himself, so hath he given to the Son to have life in himself," John v. 26. The Son, therefore, and the Father have the same life. But the Father hath given the Son to have life in himself. In these words, therefore, it is affirmed, that the divine life which is possessed by the Son originated with the Father. For reference is here made not to the economy entered into between the Father and the Son, as our opponents say, concerning the power given by the Father to the Son either to give or restore life to men, but to the very nature of the Son. It is true, indeed, that Christ in the preceding part of the chapter speaks of his power to give life to the dead, but it is also true that what he says here has reference to his nature and power as God. When he says that the Son has life and life-giving power in himself, he compares himself with the Father, and therefore the source of life is in him as well as in the Father, in respect namely of divine essence, because this is the foundation on which the whole arrangement entered into between them

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rests, and because in this instance the Son speaks absolutely. See also John vi. 57.

(4.) Let us consider the names of the persons, those especially of the Father and the Son which take this relative subsistence for granted, and for which, if it be denied, no reason whatever can be assigned.

Socinians, indeed, do give other reasons for the names. They say, for instance, that Christ is called the Son because he was appointed to the office of Mediator, because he was miraculously born of the Virgin, because he was endued with extraordinary gifts, and because he was raised from the dead; but none of them add because he was a partaker of the same nature with the Father. We admit that these things are manifestations of the sonship of Christ, but they afford no satisfactory reason why this name is given to him. This reason is to be found only in the relative subsistence of the Father and the Son. The following propositions will serve to prove this.

I. In the names Father and Son there is implied something analogous to the meaning which they bear amongst ourselves, otherwise there would be no reason for employing them. This analogy is to be found in the relative subsistence of the persons to whom the names are given. Deny this relation and you take away the reason for making use of the terms. From this it follows that the mere participation of nature is not sufficient to explain them. Two brothers, for example, may be called one; but not father and son, because these names imply that the one shares life with the other. The mere participation of essence is not sufficient: there must be some property in the Son by which he has life from the Father.

II. Christ is called the Son, not in every sense, but with a force and meaning greater than what the name has when it is applied to man. We find many, indeed, called sons of God; but before them all Christ is in a higher sense so designated, even "the Son of God with power," Rom. i. 4, "the first-born of every creature," Col. i. 15, "the only begotten Son," John i. 18; God's "own Son," Rom. viii 32. It follows from this therefore, as we have already said, that the reason why this name is given to him must be something which is peculiarly and exclusively applicable to him. It cannot be the circumstance of his miraculous birth, because Adam was created by a miraculous exercise of divine power, and Isaac also was born when his parents were far advanced in years. Neither can Christ be so called on account of his resurrection from the dead, because others, as well as he, were restored to life.

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III. The reason of this name is to be found in something higher than his human nature. This is evident from the fact that he is said to have been born before every creature, to be the first begotten, to have been made flesh. "We beheld," John says, "his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father," (John i. 14) the glory, namely, of the Word, of whom he had said, that he was in the beginning and that he was made flesh or a man. In respect of his divine nature, therefore, he is called the Son, and in this we are to seek the reason why he bears this name. "Unto us," says the prophet, "a son is given," Isai. ix. 6; God "spared not his own Son," Rom. viii. 32. He is called "the brightness of his Father's glory and the express image of his person," Heb. i. 3. It is expressly said that he was "declared to be the Son of God according to the spirit of holiness," in opposition to flesh or the human nature, Rom. i. 4. All those reasons for the name, therefore, which are derived from his miraculous birth, his resurrection, and the like, are false.

IV. He is called the Son of God on account of his participation with him of the divine essence. He stood in this relation before he was set apart to the mediatorial office, before the economy of grace was settled, before the decree that had reference to it. If this be true, it is clear that all the reasons alleged for the ascription of this name derived from the economy of grace fall to the ground.

He is not called the Son of God because of his appointment to the mediatorial office. He is called in Scripture the Son of God before his appointment to the Mediatorship. This is plain from the passages which have been already quoted. He "spared not his own Son," Rom. viii. 32. "God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son," John iii. 16. In this he afforded the highest expression of his love. He gave not any one, but his well beloved, his only begotten Son. He was his Son, therefore, before he was set apart to this work. "Unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given," Is. ix. 6. "Though he were a Son, yet learned he obedience by the things which he suffered," Heb. v. 8. "But when the fulness of the time was come, God sent forth his Son," Gal. iv. 4. From these passages we infer that the order and mode of subsistence of the divine persons are founded in their own nature, and that the three persons stand intimately related to each other, so that the Son is from the Father. The same is true in regard to the Spirit and may be gathered from the name he bears. But what

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has been already said may suffice for the right understanding of this point.

Having thus finished the *didactic* exposition of the doctrine of the Trinity, both generally and specially, we now proceed to review the various opinions that have been held concerning it, and to establish what we consider to be the truth from the objections that have been urged against it.

The various opinions that have been entertained in every age on this doctrine relate partly to the unity of essence, partly to the personality, and partly to the mode of subsistence, and we shall enumerate the different views which have prevailed in regard to each of these.

In reference to the unity of essence in the three persons, we observe that there has been no dispute concerning the divinity of the Father but concerning that of the Son and especially of the Holy Spirit.

There have been some who supposed that they could not uphold the glory of the Father except by degrading the Son, to use an expression of Augustin's. Such there were as early as the second century, as well as afterwards, who denied the true divinity of Christ, although in different centuries it was done in different ways.

Theodotus, a tanner of Byzantium, did so in the 2d century, and was at length excommunicated by Papa Victor. In the 3d century Artemon his successor, and Paul of Samosata a bishop of Antioch, maintained that Christ was a mere man who had no existence previous to his being born of the Virgin. Arius in the 4th century went somewhat higher and said that Christ though a created being was far superior to all others, that he existed before the formation of the world, and that in the exercise of that divine power with which he was invested he created all things. But he denied that he was a partaker of the divine nature; he held that he was still only a creature, and therefore in nature inferior to God. He was a Presbyter of Alexandria, of which Alexander was Bishop, who in that century condemned him in a synod composed of a hundred Bishops. Arius, however, soon after procured the cancelling of the sentence that had been pronounced against him. The matter was brought under the notice of Constantine, who summoned a council to meet at Nice in Bithynia. This Council consisted of 316 Bishops who condemned Arius and his followers. The heresy however still continued in the Church, and was propagated through Asia and Africa for 300 years, from the middle of the 4th to the middle

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of the 7th century. The followers of Arian frequently persecuted the orthodox party.

The Semiarians also deny the unity of the divine essence—calling Christ, indeed, the Son of the Father but not one with the Father, similar to him in essence but not partaking with him of the same essence. These disputes however about the divinity of the Son ceased about the time of the Reformation. Valentinus Gentilis, an Italian, who was the first to revive this heresy, was seized and beheaded by the inhabitants of Berne. He was born in Consentia, and though at first a Tritheist afterwards became an Arian. Lœlius and Faustus Socinus revived the heresy of Artemon and of Paul of Samosata.

Lœlius, who was a distinguished man, was on terms of intimacy with Calvin at Geneva. He died when he was 62 years of age. Faustus his successor came into hereditary possession of his brother's writings and promulgated his peculiar opinions. He had followers in the person of Franciscus David and George Blandrata, the former of whom fled into Poland and died at Cracow in the year 1604. Blandrata penetrated into Transylvania and propagated his heresy at Claudiopolis. These persons held that Christ was no more than a man, and had no existence before he was born of Mary, that he is called God because he was endued by God with divine gifts—divine wisdom and divine honour—because he takes delight in the power which he received from God of bestowing eternal life, and because he was miraculously born of the Virgin, raised from the dead, and taken up into heaven, which is a certain symbolical birth.

In regard to the Holy Spirit, the Macedonians in the 4th century (the followers of Macedonius, patriarch of Constantinople, who under Theodosius was condemned and deposed by the œcumenical council there) said that he was a creature or an influence proceeding from God, whose essence is divided and diffused among all created objects.

After the Reformation this error was revived by Christopher Sandius, who held that the Holy Spirit was one of the unfallen angels. He was opposed and refuted by Vittichius. Biddle also, an Englishman, maintained that he was the chief of the unfallen angels. These were all grievously mistaken regarding the unity or divinity of essence in the Son and the Holy Spirit.

Others, as Noetus, who, in the second century, disseminated his heresy through Asia, and Praxeas in Italy, entertained erroneous opinions concerning the personality. They admitted that there was only one person, and said that the Trinity was but several modifica-

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tions or manifestations of one and the same person, and that the same essence is called at one time the Father, at another the Son, and at another the Holy Spirit. They said that it was the Father who suffered in the person of Christ, and in consequence, they and their followers were called Patripassians. There arose afterwards a sect who held that the three persons were only three modes of subsistence of the same person—that by the Father we are to understand the intelligence, by the Son the judgment, and by the Spirit the will of God.

After the Reformation also the same doctrine was held by Bartholomew, Peter Poiret, Keckermann, and others. They were most unhappy in the expressions which they employed in explaining the views which they entertained. They said that the Father was one substance, that he formed a representation of himself which they called the Son, and that, as the Father loves that representation, the Spirit is just the affection which he entertains for that representation.

Socinians also deny the personality of the Holy Spirit, and understand by him nothing more than a certain divine influence or emanation, which the Father puts forth in working and which he withdraws when the work is accomplished.

Some moreover were in error in regard to the mode of subsistence. They held that there are three principles; they denied that the Son is from the Father as a son properly so called—and said that this name is given to him in respect of that arrangement by which the second person of the Trinity was appointed to the office of Mediator, miraculously introduced into the world, and raised from the dead. He therefore received the person of the Son and generation properly so called. Such were the opinions of Roell in the 17th century, and in these he was followed by others. In the same class may be ranked the Tritheists who held that there were three natures. But Tritheism is in reality an imaginary heresy, for it implies that there are three who possess separately a divine essence, which no sect of Christians however admits. Hence some denied that Christ had his essence from the Father, although in this way they equally undermined the foundation of truth.

Widely different from all those opinions is the singular heresy of Michael Servetus. This unfortunate man was burnt alive in the time of Calvin on account of his blasphemous opinions regarding the Trinity. He made a distinction between the Word of God and Son of God. He said that Jesus Christ was he who was born in time and

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who was taken from the word by Mary, that the Son of God therefore was a creature who did not exist before Mary, but was born of her by the seed of the eternal Word of God, which now is the second Word of God. He said that the first Word of God was a future representation of the Son and an exhibition of him made in former ages. It is to this exhibition and representation that he gives the name of the first word.

He makes this representation to consist in the way in which God manifested himself under the New Testament dispensation. He said also that it resembled the human form, and he called the manifestation or representation made in this way the Word of God. This Word he said was the seed from which was born in time of Mary the Son of God, who is Christ our Lord. From this may easily be seen that he held a real Trinity, and represented Christ as a mere man. See on this subject the Bibliotheca Bremensis, Class i. Such are the principal heresies which prevailed regarding the Trinity, and some of which are still in existence.

We shall now defend the view which we hold from the principal objections that have been urged, and refute the arguments of our opponents. We shall review the objections in the order already followed, those namely, 1. Against the unity of essence, 2. Against the distinct personality, and 3. Against the relative mode of subsistence.

In regard to the first of these, the unity of essence, we mean, in three persons, our opponents assail especially the divinity of the Son, and with this we have now mainly to do. Their arguments are founded on those passages in Scripture in which

(*a.*) The Father is said to be the one only God.

(*b.*) The attributes of God are denied to the Son.

(*c.*) All things that relate to his divinity are said to be given to the Son.

(*a.*) The first passage adduced by them in which the Father is spoken of as one God is John xvii. 3. "This is life eternal, that they might know thee, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom thou hast sent." (.) But before the argument drawn by them from this passage can have any force, they should have shewn that the Father is the only true God, and that the Son is not included. But this it would be difficult for them to do. For the word μόνος is put in construction not with σὲ the Father, but with the predicate ἀληθινὸν Θεὸν. The passage therefore may without any violence be thus rendered, "This is life eternal, that they might know thee and Jesus Christ whom thou hast sent, the only true God." This is confirmed

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by another and parallel passage where Christ is referred to. "This is the true God and eternal life," 1 John v. 20. (..) If, besides, the Father alone be referred to in this passage, they should have shewn that the particle or word *only* excludes objects of the same kind as well as those of a different kind. The very reverse of this however is uniformly the case. Therefore when the Father is called "the only true God," Christ is not excluded inasmuch as he is of the same kind and possesses the same essence as the Father. There is a reference in the passage to idols and false gods so called, and a contrast made between him and them, 1 Cor. viii. 5, 6. The Father is called the true God, not to the exclusion of the Son however, who is the same in essence with the Father, but to the exclusion of false and strange deities, who are altogether different from the Father. It is not said, "that they might know thee, the only true God," but that they might know thee alone to be the only true God, *i. e.*, thee who alone art the true God, not thee alone the Father but thee alone the one true God. The Father therefore is not here called the only true God to the exclusion of the Son; but the Son also is included. There is nothing, therefore, in this passage at variance with the opinion which we entertain. The title given to the Father in particular is applicable also to the Son. And the reason is evident. The Son is from the Father—the Father shares divinity with the Son.

They adduce another passage (1 Cor. viii. 5, 6) from which we may easily understand and illustrate what has just been said. The apostle, it is objected, having stated that there be many that are called Gods, immediately adds, "to us there is but one God the Father, of whom are all things, and one Lord Jesus Christ by whom are all things. Here again we reply that one God does not exclude one Lord as one Lord does not exclude one God. As, therefore, when our Lord is called one Lord, it is not meant to be denied that the Father is one God, so neither, when the Father is called one God, is it denied that the Son is one Lord. Paul besides, in the 5th verse, in making mention of other so called Gods expressly means that the Father is called the one God in reference to them and that Christ is the one Lord in reference to other Lords so called. He does not therefore call the Father by this name in opposition to the Son but in opposition to false gods eminently so named. The name God is connected with the Father and the name Lord with Christ. Lastly, when the apostle calls the Father one God of whom are all things, he has reference to the origin of all, even of the Son

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himself as we have already explained. In order to understand his meaning, let it be observed that he considers the Father as the origin and the Son as the producing cause of all things, inasmuch as God by him created all and by him the worlds were made. In this sense he calls the Father one God and the Son one Lord. This he intimates when he tells us there is "one God of whom are all things" and "one Lord by whom are all things," and clearly explains for what purpose he so designates God and Christ,—to teach us namely to regard the Father as the origin as the first person, and the Son as of the Father and as the cause of all things. Thus there is nothing in this passage in in opposition to our belief, but every thing is perfect harmony with it.

There is still another passage on which our opponents found an objection. We refer to 1 Tim. ii. 5. The apostle in the beginning of the chapter, we are told, exhorts that supplications, &c. should be made for all men, and then for the purpose of enforcing his exhortation, he adds that there is "one God" who will have all men to be saved, and "one Mediator, the man Christ Jesus." Our answer to the objection now stated is this. Not only may what has already been said be applied in explaining the apostle's words, but there is another reason why God is called one. This reason has no reference to unity of essence, but to men in their collective capacity. The apostle in calling him one God, means that he is God to all alike and stands in the same relation to all. He proves that prayers should be offered for all, because God wills all to be saved, because he is one God—not of the Jews only but of the Gentiles also—the middle wall of partition between them having been broken down. In like manner there is also one Mediator, because he stands in the same relation to all, not only to the Jews but also the Gentiles. The case was different under the old dispensation. There was not then a Mediator of one, Gal. iii. 20, *i. e.*, of one God who stood in the same relation to all, seeing that God was the God only of the Jews. Moses therefore was not a real but a typical and external mediator, because he is called a Mediator not of one, *i. e.*, not of God as God equally to all and as occupying one and the same relation to all, for he was the God of the Jews only to the exclusion of the Gentiles. Now however under the New Testament he is the God alike of both. The apostle clearly intimates this in another place. "Is he the God of the Jews only? is he not also of the Gentiles? Yes, of the Gentiles also: Seeing it is one God which shall justify the circumcision by faith, and uncircumcision through faith," Rom. iii. 29, 30.

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But why, it is asked, is the one God here called the Mediator, the man Christ Jesus? Is it not meant by this that he is not God? By no means, we reply. We infer from such language nothing more than this, that he became man for the purpose of discharging his work as Mediator. Why then is he called man and not God? Obviously for the only reason which bore upon the point in hand, that the apostle namely might infer that God was willing that all, Gentiles as well as Jews, should be saved, because the Mediator is man and therefore is related to all men. Thus as he had called God one, so now he says that there is one Mediator, the man Christ Jesus, in order to furnish a new argument to prove that God wishes the salvation of all whether Jews or Gentiles.

(*b.*) Our adversaries endeavour to shew that in some passages divine attributes are denied to Christ.

They say that he has not foreknowledge and appeal to Mark xiii. 32. "Of that day and that hour," we there read, "knoweth no man . . . . neither the Son, but the Father:" therefore he is not the true God. But, we reply, the most that can be concluded from this passage is this, that something which is really divine, is, in a certain sense, denied to the Son, in respect, we mean, of his human nature—seeing that this nature is put for his whole person. Just as God may be said to have purchased the church "with his own blood" (Acts xx. 28), so also may the Son of Man be said to have been ignorant of the day of judgment in respect of his human nature, inasmuch as he was then sojourning among men and as man is represented as increasing in wisdom, Luke ii. 52.

It is still objected that Christ is here represented as greater and more excellent than the angels, and this not as a man (for a gradation is observed "not the angels, neither the Son") and that yet he is said in other places to be "lower than the angels," Heb. ii. 7 compared with Ps. viii. 5. It is true, indeed, that the Son of God is lower than the angels, but not in respect of his being the Son of God; for as such he is superior to them because he is the Son of God even in his human nature,—he had this personality, this dignity, although he was made man; but he was lower than the angels in his being made a servant and liable to sufferings, not in his being a man but in his being a man of sorrows and subject to death. It may, therefore, be said that as a man he knew not when the day of judgment would come. But it is not necessary to have recourse to such an interpretation as this, and to ascribe ignorance on this subject to Christ; because the passage may be understood to refer to the

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appointment of that day, or to the decree of the Father with whom alone its appointment lay—"of that day knoweth no man," that is, no man hath appointed it, not the angels, neither the Son but the Father only. All that is meant is that the Father is the original cause of all things, that by his decree, as we shall see afterwards, all things are appointed, and that this in an œconomical sense is the work which is peculiarly his. To *know* is thus taken for to *settle* to *decree*, as in Acts i. 7, "It is not for you to know the times or the seasons which the Father hath put in his own power," the apostles supposing that the time had come for the manifestation of the kingdom of God. There is nothing, therefore, in the passage from Mark's gospel to overturn the opinion which we hold. For we have already shewn that Scripture attributes omniscience to the Son of God, "Lord, thou knowest all things," John xxi. 17.

They object further, that supreme power to dispose of all things does not belong to Christ. When the sons of Zebedee said that they were able to be baptized with his baptism and to drink of the cup that he should drink of, he replied, "Ye shall drink indeed of my cup and be baptized with the baptism that I am baptized with; but to sit on my right hand and on my left is not mine to give but for whom it is prepared of my Father," Matt. xx. 22, 23. It does appear strange that Scripture should thus contradict itself, for in another place it represents Christ as saying "All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth," Matt. xxviii. 18, and again the Father "hath committed all judgment unto the Son," John v. 22. How then does he now deny this regarding himself? We reply that in the language which he here uses he does not make such a denial, but only refers to the Father and to the manner in which this matter was settled and arranged by him. He does not say it is not mine to give at all, but it is not mine to give absolutely; and therefore he adds "for whom it is prepared of my Father." By using this language he means nothing more than that it belongs to the Father to dispose of all things, and that it belongs to himself to act in conformity to that arrangement. And hence we often find him intimating this by saying that the Son of himself could do nothing, John v. 30. It is plain therefore that in Scripture none of the divine attributes are denied to Christ.

(*c.*) Our opponents draw an argument in their favour from those passages in which those things which refer to divinity are said to be given to the Son. "All power is *given* to me in heaven and in earth," Matt. xxviii. 18. They say that what Christ possesses has

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been bestowed upon him by an act of grace and that therefore he is not the true God. Now we admit that this is true, but that it is true only in respect to the mediatorial office to which he was appointed or in respect of his personal subsistence, as it is said, "As the Father hath life in himself, so hath he given to the Son to have life in himself," John v. 26. It is partly true therefore, *first* in regard to his personal subsistence flowing from the divine essence which Scripture calls his *generation*, and *secondly* in regard to his mediatorial office, inasmuch as, in consequence of his accomplishment of the work of redemption, power was given to him as Lord, and in this sense he is said to have been made by God "both Lord and Christ," Acts ii. 36. But the glory which God bestowed upon him as Mediator is not inconsistent with his divinity. He himself distinctly says, "O Father, glorify thou me with thine own self, with the glory which I had with thee before the world was," John xvii. 5. Paul also says, that he "thought it not robbery to be equal with God but made himself of no reputation," and adds that God hath "given him a name that is above every name," Philip. ii. 6, 7, 9. In the latter clause of this quotation allusion is made to the glory with which God invested him after having finished the work given him to do.

CHAPTER XIV.

THE TRINITY.

OBJECTIONS TO THE PERSONALITY OF THE HOLY SPIRIT—FIGURATIVE LANGUAGE—ALLEGED CONTRADICTION—REFUTATION OF REASONS ASSIGNED WHY CHRIST IS CALLED THE SON OF GOD—MIRACULOUS BIRTH, MEDIATORIAL OFFICE, RESURRECTION FROM THE DEAD—OBJECTION FOUNDED ON HIS GENERATION AND RELATIVE MODE OF SUBSISTENCE—PRACTICAL VIEW OF THE DOCTRINE OF THE TRINITY.

In regard to the objections against the personal subsistence, these refer only to the personality of the Spirit. Our opponents endeavour to evade the force of the arguments usually employed in proof of this doctrine, and say that all that is affirmed of the Spirit as a person must be understood figuratively as a prosopopoeia, just as Paul speaks of charity as suffering long, kind, and seeking not her own, 1 Cor. xiii. 4, &c., and of sin as reigning, having dominion, and working death in him, Rom. vi. 12, 14; vii. 13. We admit that Scripture often makes use of figurative language; but we deny that it does so

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in the present case. (1) Scripture never uses a figure without explaining it in other places. There is no instance of its continually employing the prosopopoeia. Although sin and charity and other things are personified, yet in other passages they are not so. To use such language, however, as it uniformly does, in reference to the personality of the Spirit, is contrary to reason, more especially as the subject is one of such vast importance, involving as it does the religious worship which we are to render, and on which, as we have already seen, Scripture speaks with the utmost accuracy. (2) Prosopopoeia is never employed except about objects in regard to which no one doubts that they are not persons. We would be led into manifest error if Scripture adopted such a mode of expression on subjects of paramount importance. But where there is no danger of mistake, personification is sometimes used, as when charity, sin, and the like are spoken of. (3) The objection urged in the present case has all the less weight from the fact that Scripture often uses the name of the Spirit in passages in which we cannot even suspect that it is figuratively employed, as, for instance, when we are said to be baptized in his name as well as in that of the Father and of the Son, Matt. xxviii. 19;—when he is represented as "dividing to every man severally as he will," 1 Cor. xii. 11;—and when the communion of the Holy Ghost is made the subject of prayer, as well as the grace of Christ and the love of God, 2 Cor. xiii. 14. We have thus abundant evidence that the figurative language referred to is not employed in regard to the personality of the Holy Spirit, and that our arguments in proof of this doctrine are not able to be set aside.

But it is said that, if there be three persons really distinct from each other, then they cannot be one; for this would involve a contradiction. It would be a contradiction, we allow, if it were affirmed that they were three in the same sense in which they are one, if we maintained that the three persons had distinct essences. But we hold that they are three in another sense than they are one. They are three in respect of subsistence; they are one in respect of essence. The only question, therefore, is, Is it agreeable to reason that these two things should be true? Three men may be said to have one essence. In the same way we may, advancing further, understand that three may be one, and possess the same essence and yet in respect of their mode of thinking, willing, and acting, be three. There is what is called a numerical unity, which means nothing more than that they have not a distinct and separate essence. In this unity there is no contradiction, because we may conceive three subsistences, having the same at-

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tributes, the same perfections, the same operations, the same mode of thinking, willing, and acting, and a consciousness of what passes in the mind of each other. There is nothing in reason, as far as we can see, which makes these two propositions contradictory. It is altogether a different thing to say that the divine persons possess separately the divine essence, for in that case certainly the unity of God could not be preserved or maintained.

In regard to the relative mode of subsistence our opponents assign other reasons for the names given to the different persons of the Godhead, and endeavour to confirm these by Scripture.

They say that Christ is called the Son of God because he was miraculously born of the Virgin Mary. And they quote in proof of this what the angel said to her, "The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee and the power of the Highest shall overshadow thee, therefore also that holy thing which shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God," Luke i. 31. Nothing is more evident, they hold, than that he who was to be born of the Virgin was to be called the Son of God, because he was to proceed from her by the miraculous exercise of divine power, by the power of the Spirit, and not because, as we believe, he proceeded from eternity from God. But we reply (1) that this passage clearly teaches that we are correct in our belief. A careful examination of it warrants us to infer no more than that, among the reasons for his receiving the name given to him, the one there stated may be included. The phrase "therefore also" (διὸ καὶ) does not point to his miraculous birth as the only reason why he should be so designated—it does not exclude other reasons for the name which are elsewhere mentioned in the Sacred volume. (2) It should be carefully observed that mention is made in this passage not of the reason why he should be called the Son of God, but of the sign by which he should be known to be such, and that therefore his miraculous birth is a proof of his sonship. Hence it may be inferred that he stood in this relation because he was in this miraculous manner brought into the world by God, for this is the meaning of the expression "wherefore he shall be called the Son of God," in the sense of proving his sonship and of declaring his eternal generation, leading men to the sure conclusion that he who was born of Mary was the Son of God. "Unto us a son is given," Is. ix. 6. (3.) By the Holy Ghost here we are to understand that the divine nature of Christ is referred to, and that an intimation is thus given that in his miraculous conception the divine and human natures would be united. And therefore it is said that he would be, *i. e.* would be called "the Son

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of God," because the divine nature of Christ would be united with the son of Mary and in consequence of that union the son of Mary was called the Son of God. "The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee and the power of the Highest shall overshadow thee; therefore also," &c. Because the divine nature is to be most closely united to him, he shall be called the Son of God. He will be the Son of God in one person with thy son. In like manner he is the same who is called "the seed of David according to the flesh," Rom. i. 3. He is said to be of the fathers "as concerning the flesh, over all, God blessed for ever," Rom. ix. 5. "And the power of the Highest shall overshadow thee," by which we understand the Holy Spirit, by whom she was to be sanctified, and rendered fit for giving birth to the Son of God. In whatever sense therefore the passage may be understood, it cannot be viewed as implying that Christ is called the Son of God simply because he was miraculously born of the Virgin.

But it is said again that he is so called on account of his appointment to the mediatorial office, and of his being endowed as mediator with the gifts of the Spirit. Thus it is written, "Say ye of him whom the Father hath sanctified and sent into the world, Thou blasphemest, because I said, I am the Son of God?" John x. 36. Our Lord had said (verse 30) "I and *my* Father are one." This declaration gave offence to the Jews because he asserted in it his equality with the Father. Our Lord defends his statement when he says, (ver. 35) "If he called them Gods unto whom the word of God came, and the Scripture cannot be broken,"—am I chargeable with blasphemy in calling myself the Son of God—I whom the Father hath sanctified and sent into the world. Our adversaries maintain that a reason is given by our Lord why he was the Son of God—because, namely, he was sanctified and sent into the world. But we reply (1) Our Lord does not here assign as a reason why he was the Son of God his sanctification by the Father. But he is adducing arguments to prove that he is the Son of God, and he appeals to his sanctification by the Father and to his mission into the world in evidence of the reality of his sonship. (2.) Christ reasons from the less to the greater, and not only defends himself for having said that he was, but directly proves that he is the Son of God. If the Scripture call "them gods to whom the word of God came" (Ps. lxxxii. 6), with a far greater right am I the Son of God, since not only has the word of God come to me, but I am that word of God, and my sanctification by the Father and my mission into the world are the evidences of my sonship. They are therefore not

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the reason but the signs and proofs of his being the Son of God, for we have already seen that he was his Son when he was set apart to the office of mediator.

They say moreover that he is so called because he was raised from the dead by the Father. The apostle says, "And we declare unto you glad tidings, how that the promise which was made unto the fathers, God hath fulfilled the same unto us their children, in that he hath raised up Jesus again; as it is also written in the second Psalm, Thou art my Son, this day have I begotten thee," Acts xiii. 32, 33. From this they infer that Christ is called the Son of God because he was raised from the dead. To this we reply (1.) There is no reason to suppose that his resurrection is here spoken of. The apostle does not say that God raised him from the dead. The language may be understood as referring to his being raised up from Mary and to his public manifestation before men. For an individual may be said to be raised up when he is sent forth as a public person and presented to the view of all. This was the case on the occasion of Christ's baptism. He was then proclaimed to be the Saviour of the world, and entered upon the discharge of his mediatorial office. The view which we have thus given of this passage is confirmed by the fact that distinct reference is made in a subsequent verse to God's having raised him from the dead, verse 34. (2.) The apostle in the passage now under consideration is speaking not of the reason why Christ is the Son of God but of the evidence of his really being so. In like manner, when he was installed into his office so to speak at his baptism, the heavens were opened and God's voice was heard saying, "This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased," Matt. iii. 17. There was thus evidence given to the world that he was the Son of God. To the same purpose are these words, "Thou *art* my Son, this day have I begotten thee," Ps. ii. 7,—not from eternity, for *this day* never has this signification, but "this day have I begotten thee," that is, in the case to which there is here a reference, by this public sign, just as at the time of his baptism. "I have begotten thee;" that is I have not only constituted thee my Son, but I have shewn that thou art so. As those words which denote action are always put for evidence and manifestation, the phrase "thou art my Son" is equivalent to—on this occasion I have by a public sign shewn and proved that thou art my Son begotten by me. That this is the meaning of the words is evident from the fact that they are applied to the several signs by which he was declared to be the Son of God, Heb. i. 5.

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It is evident from what has been said that the reason is not here given why Christ is the Son of God, but only an external sign in proof of his sonship. But even if we should understand the apostle as alluding to his resurrection from the dead, his language would not contradict our opinion. Because that event was also a proof of Christ's sonship, even of his eternal generation, for he was "declared to be the Son of God with power, according to the Spirit of holiness, by the resurrection from the dead," Rom. i. 4. But the language of the apostle in his address to the people of Antioch does not bear upon this point.

Besides these and other passages of Scripture on which our opponents found their objections, they attempt to prove by a process of reasoning that his real generation and his relative mode of subsistence or his being of the Father are inconsistent with his being really divine. They say that if he be of the Father he must be inferior to and dependent upon him, and be posterior to him in point of time. The Father being prior must be also greater, just as he that begets is greater than he that is begotten. This, we admit, is true in the generation of creatures, but not in the very nature of generation nor in divine generation: and the reason is this. Generation in God is a natural and necessary act, and thus he who is produced may exist at the same time and possess the same perfection with him who produces. We have already seen that the relative mode of subsistence by which the Son is from the Father is in God eternal, natural, and necessary. Now generation, which in God is also natural and therefore eternal and necessary, is in his very essence which is by this act communicated. Therefore he who is begotten is in respect of nature equally independent with him who begets. Human generation is attended with imperfection, the person produced being inferior to him from whom he springs. Such is not the case however in regard to that which is divine, because, as we have stated, it is a natural and necessary action on the part of God and therefore co-eternal with his being. We say, for example, that the sun is prior in order but not in time to the rays which he emits. Thus when the whole essence is shared with him who is begotten, he is not posterior to him by whom he is begotten, and such is the meaning of the expression here.

(*b.*) It now remains that we consider the doctrine of the Trinity practically or in its relation to the works of God. And it is highly necessary to do so. For the only design of Scripture in revealing this mystery is to acquaint us with the relation which it has to external

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things and to our own salvation, and with the duties that devolve upon us in reference to the persons in the Godhead.

In regard to the relations in which the three persons stand to the external works of God as they are called, we remark that they exactly correspond to the manner and order of subsistence in the persons themselves. Now as the Father is first in the manner of subsistence —as the Son is second in order, and the Spirit third, the Son from the Father and the Spirit from the Father and the Son, such also must be the mode and order of their operations. The Father is the origin and foundation of all the divine works—the Son is their efficient cause, and the Holy Spirit perfects and consummates them. This is intimated to us in Scripture when it says, "To us *there is but* one God, the Father, of whom *are* all things, and we in him, and one Lord Jesus Christ, by whom *are* all things, and we by him," 1 Cor. viii. 6. The apostle in this passage considers the Father as the first principle or cause of all—the Son as the instrument by whom the work is accomplished, and the Holy Spirit who is a life-giving Spirit and the third in order as the agent who applies the work to the design for which it has been produced.

The external works of God are of two kinds—the work of nature and the work of grace. The work of nature consists of creation, preservation, and government. Now in this work the three persons have their respective place, the Father being the originating—the Son the efficient—and the Holy Spirit the perfecting cause. According to the common distinction creation is by the Father, redemption by the Son, and sanctification by the Spirit.

But this distinction is an unsatisfactory one, because creation is also the work of the Son. The Father is not said to create except by the Son, John i. 3; Eph. iii. 9; Col. i. 16; Heb. i. 2.

It is more correct to say that the work of the Father is the foundation of all the others, a foundation which he laid in creating and decreeing. Scripture represents him as arranging all things by his eternal determinate purpose, and assigning to them their order and respective ends. It also distinctly ascribes to him the material of which all things are made, for he is said to have "created the heaven and the earth," Gen. i. 1. But the works which followed are spoken of as having been performed by the Word of God. God, for example, said in the beginning of creation, "let there be light,"—"let there be a firmament,"—"let there be lights in the firmament." Yet "by the word of the Lord were the heavens made, and all the host of them by the breath of his mouth," Ps. xxxiii. 6. They are

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all said to have been created also by the Son, John i. 3; Col. i. 16. In like manner also decree is attributed to the Father, "Even so, Father, for so it seemed good in thy sight," Matt. xi. 26; he "worketh all things after the counsel of his own will," Eph. i. 11. Hence it is that the Father is presented to us, (1.) As absolute Lord of heaven and of earth, without whose pleasure was not anything made that was made. (2.) As the supreme lawgiver whose will is the rule of our actions. (3.) As the origin of all—at whose pleasure all things were made. Scripture usually styles him by way of eminence God. "To us *there is but* one God, the Father, of whom are all things," 1 Cor. viii. 6. In creation he has manifested the divine perfections, which in respect of personality are usually ascribed to the Father. Hence Christ must also satisfy the justice of the Father, for he is the origin and foundation of all decrees.

The work of the Son is to execute the will of the Father, by creating all things as to their form, and thus the creation of each part belongs to him, as God in the beginning declares when he is said to have made all things "by his word," Ps. xxxiii. 6. "In the beginning was the word"—"all things were made by him," John i. 1, 3. Thus also he is "the first-born of every creature, for by him were all things created," &c., Col. i. 15, 16; by him also God "made the worlds," Heb. i. 2; God "created all things by Jesus Christ," Eph. iii. 9.

The work of the Holy Spirit consists in his carrying all things in creation and providence to a consummation, and in his adapting them to their several ends. Hence all beauty, harmony, and motion are ascribed to him. He is called the Spirit, and in respect of his being the cause of life he is said to have moved, at creation, upon the face of the deep, that he might produce motion, Job xxvi. 13; Ps. xxxiii. 6. Hence also, all the endowments by which men are fitted for the purposes to which they are destined are attributed to the Spirit as their author. Thus Joseph is said to have had the Spirit of God Gen. xli. 38. In like manner Bezaleel who was called to construct the tabernacle is spoken of as filled "with the Spirit of God," Ex. xxxi. 3. Those who performed heroic deeds are said to have performed them by "the Spirit of the Lord," Judg. iii. 10; xiv. 6. In a word, all that renders a man fit for the work to which he has been appointed is ascribed to the Spirit.

In regard to the work of grace, the same thing is to be observed as in the work of nature. The Father lays the foundation of it, the Son executes, and the Holy Spirit applies it.

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We say, first, the Father lays the foundation of it both by giving his Son to be mediator, and by giving salvation to man himself. His work, therefore, has reference to the Son and to men. Both belong to the foundation.

In reference to the Son the work of the Father was this.

He ordained him to the mediatorial office, when he sanctified him and sent him into the world, John iii. 16.

He furnished him with wisdom and fitted him for discharging all the duties of his office, Is. xi. 2. He anointed him with the unction of the Holy Spirit, and thus qualified him for the work to which he was appointed, Is. lxi. 1.

He manifested to the world by the testimony which he bore to Christ that he was his Son. "This is my beloved Son" he said at his baptism, "hear ye him," Matt. iii. 17. The miracles also which Christ performed and which are called the works that the Father gave him to do are signs and evidences given by the Father in proof of his being indeed the Saviour of the world.

He raised his Son from the dead and thus proved that he had sent him and that he was well pleased with his work. "God raised him from the dead." (Acts xiii. 30) and thus publicly justified him. And hence it is, moreover, that the Father justifies believers in Christ with whom he is well pleased for the sake of their surety, and that the Son is said to have died for them, Rom. viii. 34.

Let us consider the work of the Father in reference to men. As it belonged to him to lay the foundation of this work in sending Christ to redeem, it must also be his to give men to his Son to be saved by him. For Christ saves none unless they are united by faith to him. In laying the foundation of the work of grace, therefore, the latter was as necessary as the former. From this it is evident that the work of the father consists

(1.) In choosing men and in promising and appointing grace to them.

Thus election is ascribed to the Father. "He hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world," Eph. i. 4. We are "predestinated according to the purpose of him who worketh all things after the counsel of his own will," Eph. i. 11.

(2.) In calling and regenerating men, and thus producing that faith by which they are united to Christ. This calling and regeneration are ascribed to the Father. "No man," says Christ, "can come to me, except the Father which hath sent me draw him," John vi. 44. "Giving thanks unto the Father . . . who hath

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delivered us from the kingdom of darkness and hath translated *us* into the kingdom of his dear Son," Col. i. 12, 13. "Blessed *be* the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, which, according to his abundant mercy, hath begotten us again unto a lively hope," 1 Pet. i. 3.

(3.) In delivering those who are united to Christ from sin, and in declaring their title to eternal life.

And therefore it is that justification belongs to the Father. "It is God that justifieth—it is Christ that died," Rom. viii. 33, 34.

The work of the Son consists in his fulfilling the Father's will—in saving those whom the Father has given to him. "This is the Father's will which hath sent me, that of all which he hath given me I should lose nothing," John vi. 39. In this work of the Son is included

(1.) His purchasing salvation for his people. This he did by his obedience "unto death, even the death of the cross," Philip. ii. 8.

(2.) His receiving the purchased redemption, which he did after his exaltation when all power was given to him both in heaven and on earth, Matt. xxviii. 18.

(3.) His bestowing and applying the blessings which he had procured. Thus it is said that he "received gifts for," or to be conferred upon, "men," Ps. lxviii. 18. In this respect he is our Redeemer who has purchased our salvation and who bestows it upon us.

The work of the Holy Spirit consists in his applying the redemption promised by the Father and purchased by the Son, and in his thus bringing to a consummation the work of both. Hence arises a distinction between the Spirit of the Father and of the Son, inasmuch as he has to do with the work of each.

In regard to the work of the Father, who, as we have said sent his Son and manifested him to the world, the Spirit consummated that work, inasmuch as he furnished the Son with the qualifications requisite for his mediatorial office. Hence Christ is said to have been anointed with the Spirit—the Spirit is said to have rested upon him—Christ is represented as performing miracles by the Spirit. It is the work of the Father, besides, to give men to Christ and to unite them by faith to him. And this the Spirit does. It is he who regenerates and convinces. In this work he acts as the Spirit of the Father.

But he is also the Spirit of the Son, inasmuch as he consummates his work, applies to believers all the blessings of grace, assures them of their justification, sanctifies, seals, and comforts them. In addition to these general blessings, he is in a particular manner the Spirit of Christ, inasmuch as he advances the dispensation of Christ

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under the New Testament by producing in believers those affections which are suitable to the dispensation under which they are placed. For this reason he is particularly called the Spirit of Christ, Gal. iv. 6 ; Philip. i. 19.

As in the dispensation of the economy, or covenant of grace, the works of God are gradually performed before, at, and after the manifestation of Christ, we may very briefly inquire into the relation in which the three persons stand to these different dispensations. On this point various opinions are entertained,—some referring the dispensation of promise to the Father, that of the Gospel to the Son, and that of glory and blessedness to the Spirit—others referring the dispensation before the coming of Christ to the Father, that which subsisted at our Lord's incarnation and during his abode among men to Christ himself, and the evangelical dispensation or that which has continued since our Lord's ascension to heaven to the Spirit. Neither of these opinions seem to us correct.

It is wrong to refer the dispensation of glory to any one divine person, as it would then be no longer the arrangement of the Trinity. Saints in heaven, however, will be blessed, not with each of the persons according to a different dispensation and relation, but they will according to the state of glory have immediate intercourse with the triune Jehovah. Then shall Christ deliver up the kingdom to the Father, God shall be all in all, and the work of salvation be brought to its triumphant and glorious issue.

It is no less incorrect to attribute to the Spirit a peculiar dispensation, for he has to do with the dispensation both of the Father and of the Son, and is on this account called the Spirit of God and the Spirit of Christ. In our opinion, therefore, there are but two dispensations—those namely of the Father and of the Son—the one of promise, the other of grace or the Gospel dispensation—the former peculiar to the Father, the latter to the Son.

The dispensation of promise was that during which the Son was not made perfect as his people's surety, had not obtained, by actual purchase, the power to dispense the blessings of grace and was not yet exalted as the Saviour, but was beheld only in the person of the angel or messenger preparing the way for his kingdom which in the fulness of the time was to be set up. And hence it was that the Father, because he was a holy and just God, manifested greater severity as a proof that sin was still unatoned for, and that the sentence of condemnation was still uncancelled. The dispensation of the Father was thus the dispensation of God as glorious and supreme,

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whose servant and messenger was the Son of God, not yet made flesh, not yet the perfected surety and Saviour, and therefore not yet the head of the church.

The dispensation of grace or of the gospel began after the exaltation of Christ, and pertains to the Son who then received all power in heaven and in earth, sat down on the right hand of the Father, and was placed upon his throne as the king and head of the Church, and who now in the exercise of the right which he has purchased dispenses all saving blessings to his people. He is now no longer the messenger but the head of his church. God hath made him "both Lord and Christ," Acts ii. 36. This dispensation, therefore, does not wear an aspect of severity but is characterized by pure grace, for "grace and truth came by Jesus Christ," John i. 17. He is thus the head of the new or evangelical dispensation, and hence it is called the day of Christ which Abraham longed so anxiously to see, John viii. 56.

And now let us attend to the relation in which we stand to the Triune Jehovah or to each of the persons of the Trinity. We are bound to admire and adore the three in one, and to celebrate their praise as such. We should see in this mystery the foundation of the work of our redemption. In perfect consistency with his justice and holiness, God is now in Christ the sinner's God, a way has been opened by the Son by which the sinner may draw near to the Father, and deliverance is offered by the Spirit's sanctifying work from the power of sin. We should render thanks to God for the great love wherewith he hath loved us, in giving us such a glorious manifestation of himself, and in revealing a mystery which no created being could have discovered or even imagined. We should, moreover keep our eyes fixed on the Trinity as the pattern of our happiness and of the union that should exist among those who profess their faith in this great doctrine.

Considered again in reference to the divine works and in particular to the work of grace, let us see in what relations we stand to the persons of the Trinity in respect both to affections and conduct. For this end it is necessary to explain

(1.) In what way we may enjoy the triune Jehovah.

(2.) How we should regulate our feelings and conduct towards him and towards each of the persons of the Godhead.

(1.) The Apostle Paul explains the way when he speaks of "the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Ghost," 2 Cor. xiii. 14.

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First, we enjoy the Father in the everlasting love which he entertained for us and which accompanies us through time even to eternity. This love is manifested in giving his Son to be our mediator, John iii. 16; in choosing us in Christ, Eph. i. 4; in sending his Son into the world, in proving him to be so by the most convincing evidence, and in appointing him to be our Saviour and head. It is manifested in justifying us in Christ, in delivering us from our sins, and in conferring on us a right to all blessings, the blessings, namely, of grace and of glory. It is manifested in admitting us to fellowship with himself, dwelling in us, and for ever imparting to us of his own blessedness.

Secondly, we enjoy the Son in his grace both habitual and acquired. The former consists of all those endowments and virtues which he employed for our salvation—his justice, wisdom, holiness, power, and others which belong to him as our head. The latter or his acquired grace is that which he obtained by his obedience, and includes all the blessings of grace and glory which are bestowed upon us on the ground of his merits.

Thirdly, we enjoy the Holy Spirit in his fellowship. He dwells and works in us, and makes us meet to be partakers of all the blessings of grace and of glory. He communicates himself to believers, and by his operations enlightens, sanctifies, and comforts them.

(2.) In regard to our feelings and conduct, these are to be regulated according to the feelings and conduct which the persons of the Trinity have manifested towards us. The Father being the source and foundation—the Son the efficient cause—and the Holy Spirit the agent who consummates the divine works, it will not be difficult to perceive how we should be affected towards them according to the peculiar work of each, and what relation our feelings and conduct should have to them.

We will give an instance of the duty that lies upon us in regard to both our faith and our practice.

Faith begins with the Father, rests upon the Son, is perfected by the Holy Spirit, returns to the Father, and terminates with him.

It begins with the Father, because its first act is receiving his testimony concerning his Son. We could not receive the Son, or believe in him as our Saviour, unless we were assured that he was sent into the world by the Father, and that the Father was pleased with his suretiship. The Father therefore must first of all be regarded as merciful, as having given us in the exercise of his mercy a mediator and surety, and as giving us in him every blessing. By this faith

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we shew and set to our seal that God is true—we receive as truth the testimony which the Father has given of his Son. This act of faith beginning with the Father passes to the Son as our surety and as the cause of our salvation. We receive him as our prophet, priest, and king, and place our confidence in him as the author of our salvation. Hence our faith returns to the Father, inasmuch as it signifies the act by which we look on God as reconciled, so that we can cry unto him, "Abba, Father"—a privilege resulting from our union to the Son. The Spirit, moreover, is regarded as perfecting and sealing our faith. In this way our faith manifests itself towards the triune Jehovah.

As an instance of the duties which we owe to the persons of the Godhead, let us take prayer. We pray to the Father as the first person, the author of every blessing—to the Son as our surety, mediator, and advocate, in whose name and in dependance upon whose merits we present our supplications, and who by his own intercession obtains an audience for our requests—and to the Holy Spirit, who helps our infirmities in prayer, and in this sense makes intercession for us, excites in our minds all motions to that which is good, and produces in us faith that we shall be heard. Thus our Lord has taught us to pray, and to address the Father in the name of the Son and by the Holy Spirit. Our duties towards the Godhead are in particular, (1.) In respect to the Father, that we regard him with supreme affection, acquiesce in his will, and walk before him in fear, 1 Pet. i. 17. (2.) In respect to the Son, that we repose implicit reliance upon his merits, and look to him and imitate him as our perfect example; and (3.) In respect to the Holy Spirit, that we commit ourselves to his guidance, and study to avoid whatever would grieve and vex him, Eph. iv. 30.

CHAPTER XV.

THE DECREES OF GOD.

COUNSEL OF THE DIVINE WILL—EXISTENCE OF DECREES—PROVED FROM REASON AND SCRIPTURE—DIDACTIC GENERAL EXPOSITION—WHAT IS PRESUPPOSED IN A DECREE—DEFINITION OF A DECREE, ITS OBJECT, END, AND MEANS—ITS OBJECT UNIVERSAL—ITS END VIEWED IN REFERENCE TO GOD AND TO EXTERNAL THINGS—THE MEANS BY WHICH GOD EXECUTES HIS DECREES.

We have considered the divine nature both in its own essence and as it subsists in three persons. We come now to treat of the divine

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works, for we said that the nature and works of God are included in the right knowledge of him. These works, as effects bearing witness to their cause, lead us to the knowledge of God and of his perfections. But as all his works are known to him from eternity, Acts xv. 18, and as he "worketh all things after the counsel of his own will," Eph. i. 11, it is usual to speak of that eternal counsel and will before we speak of the works themselves, and to distinguish all these works into internal and external or into those which are confined to himself and those which extend to other objects. The former are those which reside in the mind of God* and are called his decrees, the latter are those which have an actual subsistence extrinsic to God† and comprehend creation and providence.

By a decree of God (a word which found its way into the Schools from the Vulgate Latin version of the Scriptures) we understand, in general his free, eternal, and immutable will regarding the future existence of events which happen in time and regarding the precise manner and order of their occurrence. We assume it as admitted that there is such a thing as a decree or that effects are not necessary on the part of God, but proceed from the unconstrained exercise of his own will, and therefore that he is not the intrinsic cause from which effects have necessarily and naturally proceeded, but the free cause that has produced all things for certain purposes by the spontaneous determination of his own will. This admits of easy demonstration both from reason and from Scripture.

If we look at effects we at once perceive that there is an order and connection and mutual relation between them, and that all have been made for certain ends. This clearly proves the existence of a cause possessed of wisdom—of a cause acting not from necessity of nature but from design, and appointing all things to specific purposes.

If we consider God himself, he appears to us an independent, all-sufficient Being—standing in need of nothing without himself—not urged by the force of his own nature to give existence to any object, but by the unfettered determination of his own will producing all things according to his decree. He appears to us, besides, to be a wise Being, and therefore does everything with a view to certain and suitable ends. But then a decree must be exempted from all control; for a Being acting by the power of his own nature acts necessarily, which, as we have seen, does not hold in regard to God who

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* Opera immanentia. † Opera transeuntia.

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is regulated in his actings by a regard to certain particular ends. Reason therefore clearly teaches us that God forms his decree freely, or that his own will determines him to do this or that.

This truth is amply confirmed by Scripture, which speaks of the free determination of his will, and, making use of various expressions, calls it *βουλὴ*, Eph. i. 11 ; *πρόθεσις*, Rom. ix. 11 ; 2 Tim. i. 9 ; and in the old Testament תפץ, *voluntas* or *bene placitum*, Is. xlvi. 10 ;—פעלים, *molimina*, Prov. viii. 22 ; עצר, *consilium*, Is. xlvi. 10 ; סוד, *arcanum*, Jer. xxiii. 18 ; חקימו מזמות, *cogitationes statutas cordis*, Jer. xxiii. 20, and in other passages by other words. Since, therefore, according to Scripture and right reason, there is a decree, we may now proceed to the consideration of it. Our treatise will assume a threefold form, *didactic*, *controversial*, and *practical*.

The first of these will be *general* and *special*—the latter having reference to that part of the decree which bears upon the ultimate condition of man and which is commonly called *predestination*. Before entering, however, upon the didactic exposition of the subject, it may be of use to make a few remarks in regard to what is meant generally by a decree.

A decree presupposes the possibility of the object or event to which it refers, and the idea and inward perception of that possibility; for unless the object or event appear to us possible, a decree would be formed inconsiderately and to no purpose, and indeed could have no existence.

It requires deliberation beforehand regarding the end in view and regarding the suitableness of the means by which that end is to be attained. For the end is the motive which urges to action, but the means aim at the attainment of that end, and in rightly adapting the means to the end lies the wisdom of him who forms the decree.

Then follows the decree itself or the free determination of the will concerning the ends and the means by which they are to be reached. It is evident from this that the decree occupies the whole mind of him who makes it—begins with the understanding, is perfected by the judgment, and is fixed in the will. The understanding perceives that the event or object is possible, the judgment deliberates or counsel is held as to the end in view and the means by which it may be attained, and then the mind determines or forms the decree.

With these preliminary remarks we may now more readily enter upon the subject proposed.

We understand by God's decree the eternal, free, and immutable determination of his will by which from things possible he resolved

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upon the existence of all which now have or will have a being. In this definition are comprehended both the *form* and the *substance* of the decree. To proceed, however, in this matter at once with prudence and precision, we shall begin with the latter and thence ascend to the cause, that is, to God by whom the decree is formed.

The *substance* of a decree includes I. the object, II. the end, and III. the means.

I. The *object* is not to be understood as comprehending all those possible things with which God is conversant in decreeing, and the ideas of which, as we have said, are natural to God and are presupposed to be in him. But we understand these possible things in a restricted sense and as embracing those only which have been destined to futurition *i. e.* to have actual existence in time. These properly speaking are the object of the divine decree.

It may be asked how far the objects reach, whether to all things which happen in time, or only to most of them, so that some are excepted, and in consequence of not having been actually decreed are not to be regarded as forming the object of the divine purpose.

We hold the universality of these objects.

We say, however, that they were not all decreed by God in the same way and are not, therefore, to be regarded in the same light as objects of the divine decree. On these two points we shall offer a few remarks.

In regard to the extent or universality of the divine decree we say that it embraces every thing that exists in time, not excepting even the least. In this respect it is coequal with creation and providence. This may be easily proved.

We have clear intimation of it in Scripture. We there read that God "worketh all things after the counsel of his own will," Eph. i. 11;—that he works not only in creating but in preserving and governing, "my Father worketh hitherto and I work," John v. 17.

And the statements of Scripture on this point are confirmed by reason. All things that happen happen by the will of God whether that will be permissive, directing, or executive. At present we only take this for granted, we will prove it afterwards when we come to treat of the providence of God. Now whatever takes place in time by the will of God must have been decreed by him; for a decree is nothing more than that by which he has determined to exercise himself in time regarding certain things in creation and providence. They could not otherwise be said to happen by his will. We do not ask whether he could have decreed more things; it is sufficient for us

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that his decree embraces every thing that takes place in time—that nothing exists in time but by his will. If this be not admitted, then we call in question his foreknowledge of future contingent events. This foreknowledge supposes the certainty of the event foreknown. A thing cannot happen before the certainty of its happening be known. But no event can be conceived which is not derived from the decree of God, because he has appointed that things shall be just as they happen. The foreknowledge of God therefore requires the previous existence of a decree or the determination of his will regarding future events, and according to the extent of that foreknowledge so is the extent of the decree. God would be deprived of his foreknowledge unless the decree be held to be universal.

Unless the object of the decree be held to be universal, the whole plan of his works could not have been present to him in decreeing, and then many things would be wanting which would have been left in uncertainty, and if in uncertainty then the connexion and harmony between all objects and all events would not have been perceived by him. Yet this constitutes alike the wisdom of him who decrees and the perfection of the decree itself. But if it be denied in regard to God, then it will follow that the idea which he formed in his decree of the present system of things was exceedingly imperfect. As such a notion, however, is opposed to the nature of God, we must hold that in forming his decree he had a regard to every thing in the whole compass of the system.

In regard to the termination of human life, it was much disputed at a former period whether or not it was fixed by the divine decree.* We hold that it was, in opposition to the advocates of free-will who say that it was left by God undefined. Before proceeding, however, to prove this, let us precisely ascertain the state of the question.

The question is not regarding some general period, beyond which man ordinarily does not pass, but concerning the life of each individual man. We cannot determine whether there be such a general period or not. Some hold that limit to be according to Scripture seventy or eighty years, Ps. xc. But this opinion is contradicted by experience. In that Psalm, besides, no such statement is made. The sacred writer refers there not to the years which men ordinarily

* "De qua fuse disputatum fuit in Belgio ante aliquot annos, studio amplissimi Viri *Joh. Beverovicii*, Medici Dordraceni, qui Virorum Doctorum super ea judicia inquisivit, eaque in *Epistolica Quæstione de Termino Vitæ* in lucem misit." *Turret. Instit.* Vol. i. p. 280. Lowe, Edinb. 1847.

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live in the world but to those during which their life is strong and active, and beyond which that strength and activity become enfeebled and impaired.

The question is not whether that period is fixed in respect to secondary causes, and cannot, in reference to these causes, be either prolonged or contracted. This we admit. The question is in reference to God.

Nor does the question relate to the termination of life in an absolute sense, but to that termination viewed in connection with means. We do not believe that, apart from all means, the period of life is determined, in whatever way a man may please to live. God who has by decree fixed the limit has fixed by decree the means also. They are bound up together in that decree and must not be dissociated in our ideas. It is not God's ordinary mode of procedure to do any thing without means.

Having settled in this way the precise state of the question it will not be difficult to establish and vindicate the opinion which we hold;—namely, that the period of every man's life is fixed by the divine decree.

Scripture distinctly affirms that it is. There is "a time to be born and a time to die," Eccles. iii. 2. Solomon does not mean by this merely to say that these events, like all others, happen in time. A statement so common would not have been made with the emphasis which the wise man here employs. His meaning obviously is that all things happen at the predetermined and proper time, and that the birth and death of each individual of our race, in regard to the period of their occurrence, are subjects of the divine decree. Of the same import are the following passages, "Seeing his days *are* determined, the number of his months *are* with thee; thou hast appointed his bounds that he cannot pass," Job xiv. 5; "In thy book all my members were written, which in continuance were fashioned, when as yet there was none of them," Ps. cxxxix. 16: God "hath determined the times before appointed and the bounds of their habitation," Acts xvii. 26.

Scripture likewise teaches us that the death which we call casual or accidental has been fixed by God, Exod. xxi. 13. The death of our Lord also was arranged by the divine decree. He was delivered "by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God," Acts ii. 23. Yet his death depended upon men. By wicked hands he was crucified and slain—the Jews, in the exercise of their own will, put him to death.

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If the period of every man's life were not thus determined by God many things would be left indefinite and uncertain. The object of his decree could not be said to be universal—nay he could not have fixed by decree any thing that related to the world at all. On the death of a single individual, of a king, for instance, depends an infinite number of circumstances and events; but if that death were excluded from the divine decree so would the innumerable results with which it is followed.

But if this be true, say some, then it is unnecessary to pray or to employ means for the prolongation of life. To this objection we reply (1.) God has fixed by decree the order and connection of events as well as the termination of life, the means as well as the end. (2.) Whatever may be the time and circumstances of our departure from the world, they are unknown by us, and therefore all necessary means must be resorted to to prolong our existence. (3.) Even if we did know the time of our death, we would still be bound to obey the will of God and to make use of means. The example of King Hezekiah is a case in point, who, although he knew that he would yet live for fifteen years (2 Kings xx. 6), did not, on that account, refrain from eating and drinking.

Another objection, founded on the promise of long life annexed to the keeping of the divine law, admits of easy refutation. We have already said that God has determined not only the end but the whole series of circumstances and events connected with it—that his decree embraces all that will happen, viewed in connection with the means. If therefore an individual will keep the divine law, the promise of long life will be fulfilled to him. In a word God has set a limit to every man's life, and pre-ordained all the circumstances and the means connected with it. The object of his decree is thus universal and comprehends every thing that happens in time.

But we must speak of the different aspects in which the decree is to be viewed, because on this depends the solution of various difficulties. When we say that the object of the divine decree is universal, we mean that all things have been decreed by God—that they all exist in virtue of his command, and exist in the way and by the means which he has ordained. This is a rule to which there are no exceptions,—that events namely happen precisely as they have been decreed, that whatever God does in the course of his providence he previously resolved he would do. We have only therefore to ascertain for what reason and in what way events occur, and then we may readily come to the conclusion that for that reason and in that way it was de-

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creed by God that they should happen. Some things happen according to the determination of God in such a sense that he is their efficient cause. There are other things which he wishes the creatures either to do or not to do, to perform or omit according to certain commands and threatenings. These he from all eternity decreed to be lawful or unlawful, to be prescribed or forbidden. They happen by his permission and direction, yet without any reflection upon his holiness. Among these we reckon moral evil or sin of which he is not the efficient cause. He determined that it should exist in the world, not because he himself should produce it, but because, by his permission and direction, it should be introduced by the creatures acting in the exercise of their own will. Then, again, there are things which God effects without infringing upon the liberty of men or interfering with the use of their natural powers. On their part they are done freely, yet on God's part it has been decreed that they should be so done. In this way the subject is easily understood, and we get rid of many difficulties. It does not follow from the circumstance of God's having made a decree that he is the efficient cause of every thing that happens. But on this subject we shall have more to say immediately.

II. In regard to the end of the decree or the purpose which God had in view and by which he was influenced in making it, we may consider that end (1.) In reference to God himself; and (2.) In reference to things themselves which were the objects of his decree.

I. In reference to God himself the general end of his decree, as far as we understand, could be only the manifestation of his own glory.

Such is plainly the doctrine of Scripture. "Of him, and through him, and to him, are all things," Rom. xi. 36. "The Lord hath made all things for himself," Prov. xvi. 4. His glory is said to be exhibited in all his works, Ps. xix. 1, 2; cxlv. 10. We are enjoined to do all things to his glory, 1 Cor. x. 31. This glory denotes not merely the manifestation, but the acknowledgment and celebration of the perfections and attributes of God. This latter is the end for which the manifestation has been made, that his intelligent creatures namely should not simply know but acknowledge his existence and infinite excellencies, and unite in the ascription of praise which ascends to him from all his works.

Reason teaches us that this is the end of his decree. We cannot conceive any other presenting itself to his infinite mind. He is an eternally existing Being, and on him all things depend. He is all-sufficient and stands in need of nothing. There is nothing, there-

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fore, besides himself that could have moved him, nothing without him for the sake of which he exists, nothing without him fitted to induce him to put forth the exercise of his power. He is the sole end of his works, and therefore the only motive that could induce him to form his decree must have been something in himself or something that bore reference to him. But as the perfections of God are various, and are not all sufficiently exhibited in one work, it will be proper to distinguish them and to consider them in reference to the divine works which are designed to illustrate them. We say, therefore (*a.*) That the attributes of goodness, wisdom, and power, were intended to be made manifest in the creation of the world. (*b.*) That he permitted the fall for the purpose of shewing his sovereignty over the creatures, and at the same time of affording an occasion of manifesting the perfections which we have just mentioned. (*c.*) That he devised the plan of redemption with the view of exhibiting his justice and mercy—his justice in punishing sin, and his mercy in saving sinners by his Son. His works are thus fitted to manifest his perfections, and the end which he contemplated in making his decree was that every thing which he made should fulfil this purpose.

From what has been said it may be easily shewn that we are not to regard, as some have done, the exhibition of any one divine perfection as the end of all the works of God. We are not to suppose, for instance, that he intended to manifest only his good will and all-sufficiency—that his only purpose was to form his creatures for holding fellowship with himself and to make them partakers of his goodness. This opinion cannot be received. Although it be true that this was the principal, yet it was not the only end. God must also illustrate his other perfections. A singular harmony pervades them all. He is not only good, but wise, and just, and holy.

Because in the work of creation we behold a wonderful display not only of his goodness but of his wisdom. This is evident from the number and variety of creatures he has formed.

Because if God in his decree had a regard to the exhibition of his goodness alone, we cannot understand how evil both moral and physical could have made its appearance, and why he appointed such inequality among the creatures, why he did not make them all equally perfect.

2. In reference to the *objects* of his decree, the end of each and all of them is that for which they were created—the real and natural effects which they, as secondary causes, produce. Thus the effects produced by the sun are light and heat, the moon also and the stars

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produce their effects, and these effects we say are the end for which these bodies were formed and which God had in view in creating them.

There are what may be called intermediate or subordinate ends, which properly belong to the providence of God and at length terminate in an ultimate end. For example, the various calamities that befel Joseph terminated in his exaltation and in his being the instrument of providing the means of subsistence for his father's house and of saving the people of Egypt from the horrors of famine. The vicissitudes which David met with ended in his exaltation to the throne of Israel and in the establishment of his kingdom. In like manner also the various fates of earthly kingdoms are connected with the final condition of men. In these ends which we call *apotelesmata* divine providence often presents many strange unaccountable aspects. Many of them, in our feeble judgment, seem directly contrary to the opinion which he has led us to form of his character and procedure. But when the issue of the whole shall be unfolded to us, we shall behold a wonderful manifestation of his wisdom and providence.

III. Let us now consider the *means* by which the divine decree is executed, and in the adaptation of which to produce the ends in view the wisdom of God consists. This wisdom is attributed to him in Scripture, Ps. civ. 24; Rom. xi. 33. As it is one of his natural perfections, it is plain that it must shew itself in his decree. And because it does so, his decree is called his "counsel," (βουλὴ,)—a word, however, let it be observed, which, denoting an action of one whose wisdom is imperfect, is not to be understood in the ordinary sense when applied to God. This is evident if we consider what counsel is in reference either to its origin or to the way in which it is formed. The best counsel owes its origin to ignorance, because the very purpose for which it is formed is that we may know what is most suitable in certain given circumstances to do. It implies besides reasoning and deliberation in order to ascertain what is best. But none of these can be regarded as necessary in God. His nature is perfect, he is possessed of all wisdom and stands in no need of deliberation. It is not to be understood, therefore, in its usual signification when applied to the wisdom with which in decreeing he has connected the means and the end. Wisdom consists in ordaining right ends and in appointing and fitly arranging means suited to accomplish these ends; and this wisdom, it will be seen, belongs to God if we consider it,

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(*a.*) In reference to himself. The ends which he proposes are worthy of him; for as we have already seen they comprehend his own glory. The means also employed to attain these ends are the fittest possible, whether that fitness be viewed as belonging to his works as a whole or as consisting in the adaptation of each of his works to its respective end. Thus the work of creation is most fitted to shew forth his wisdom, power, and goodness. This is easily understood, because these perfections spontaneously present themselves to our notice in the things which he has made. In like manner also there is the same fitness in the work of redemption to illustrate his justice and mercy. The means in short are so appointed and arranged that the one represents and follows the other. But we will speak on this subject when we come to treat of the order of the decrees.

(*b.*) The wisdom of God is evident in the ends which he contemplates if we consider the things themselves. The means are precisely suited to these ends—the intermediate causes are just such as are fitted to produce the particular effects. What better fitted, for instance, to fertilize the earth than rain, or to diffuse heat than the sun? The means, too, are suitably conjoined, so that, although some may be contrary, the one to the other, as fire and water, they nevertheless harmoniously combine in promoting the advantage of the whole. In those things besides which are necessary there is in nature no defect—in those which are superfluous there is no abundance.

CHAPTER XVI.

THE DECREES OF GOD.

EFFICIENT AND MOVING CAUSE OF THE DIVINE DECREES—DIFFERENT OPINIONS—WHEN THE DIVINE DECREES WERE FORMED—VARIOUS OPINIONS—ETERNITY OF THE DECREES PROVED—MANNER IN WHICH THEY WERE FORMED—NOT ESSENTIAL TO GOD—THEY OCCUPIED THE WHOLE MIND OF GOD—ORDER AND STEPS OF THE DECREES—SOCINIAN OBJECTION TO THE ETERNITY OF ALL THE DIVINE DECREES—THEIR SYSTEM OF CONDITIONAL DECREES REFUTED—IMMUTABILITY OF THE DECREES OF GOD.

In regard to the form of the decree four questions suggest themselves.

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1. What is the efficient cause?
2. What is the moving cause?
3. When was the decree made?
4. How it was formed in the divine mind?

(1.) The efficient cause of the divine decrees. This cause is God and God as three in one, because the persons of the Godhead partake of the same essence. Viewed economically, however, the Father is the original source of all, because he laid the foundation of all things to which the decree refers, and to him therefore the decree is usually ascribed, for he "worketh all things after the counsel of his own will," Eph. i. 11. "Even so Father" is the language of Christ, "for so it seemed good in thy sight," Matt. xi. 26.

(2.) The moving cause or that which determined God to make his decree. On this subject various opinions have been entertained and may be reduced to three classes.

(.) There is the opinion that the cause which moved God to make his decree was his own nature—that in so doing he acted according to a physical or natural necessity, just as it is the nature of fire to burn, and as other physical causes operate according to the laws that have been imposed upon them. This opinion formed part of the impious system of Spinoza, in which God is confounded with his works, and all external things are represented as having their origin in his nature. He is thus the intrinsic or immanent cause of all.

This system we have already refuted in its own place, where we proved that God is the free and efficient cause of all things and distinct from the things themselves. Passing from it, therefore, we proceed to consider

(..) The opinion that the moving cause of the decree is the pleasure and spontaneity of God. According to this opinion his decree springs from a necessary principle. Yet God is considered as distinct from the things themselves and as their efficient and creating cause. Those who hold this opinion say that the cause which moved God to act or to decree is free in as far as physical and natural necessity is concerned, but that it is necessary as flowing from the principle of love in God towards himself and his own perfections. He thus decreed freely in one sense but necessarily in another. There was not in him a proximate reason of acting, as there is in us, when we are under the influence of self-love and natural desire. On this point, however, there is a difference of opinion—some extending the necessity to the mode of acting as well to the action itself—others

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restricting it to the action and representing God, in regard to the mode, as absolutely free.

According to some God was moved to make his decree because he saw it to be fit and proper to manifest his perfections by his works. According to others the moving cause was his wisdom, which obliges him to do what is best. Now, as he always does this, they say that his decree also was of this description, and that as he does the best necessarily, he also necessarily determined to do so. All, however, agree in this that the motive by which God was actuated in making his decree was a necessary and natural motive and had its origin in that love which he entertains for himself and for his perfections.

This system will be seen, on a careful examination, to be attended with various difficulties. It is obviously irreconcileable with the nature and perfections of God. He is independent, possesses all-sufficiency in himself, has no need of objects extrinsic to himself, and stands in no necessary relation to them. We cannot understand, therefore, how for any reason he could be necessarily obliged to create external things. For if there were such a reason, then these objects would occupy a necessary relation to him—they would have some influence in making him what he is, a perfect Being. But if there be no such reason, then certainly it cannot be said that, in forming his decree, he acted from the principle of love to himself—a principle which prompts us to attend only to what contributes to our own advantage and to what has a tendency to promote our own happiness. If created things, moreover, stood in such a relation to God, the conception which he formed of them would not have been full and perfect, unless the ideas of them entered into his conception. But the conception which he forms is that of a perfect Being. As such therefore is the character of God, it obviously cannot be reconciled with his idea of things that he determined from a natural and necessary principle of love to himself to produce external objects. For there is no such principle in him. He is an independent, all-sufficient Being, the source of his own perfection, and not indebted for that perfection to anything without himself.

If God acted from an inward and necessary principle, one or other of these two things would follow—either that all things which are possible have been produced, or that all things do not stand in the same relation to him, but that some only are required to be and that the rest are not necessary. But neither of these things can be

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affirmed. It is a mistake and contrary to our ideas and to the perfections of God and especially to his omnipotence to suppose that he has produced all that is possible. Now as all possible things do not exist, it must be said, on the supposition that he acted from a necessary reason, that those things which he has produced do stand in a certain relation to him, and that the others which he has left in the state of possible existence have no relation to him at all. But neither can this be affirmed; for all things possible are of the same nature nor can it be understood how God could at one and the same time both be and not be without certain objects.

This opinion is also directly opposed to the nature of things, which if rightly considered, teaches us that there is nothing in existing objects which can lay God under a necessity to be dissociated from them.

There is a vast difference between them and the nature of God—they are all stamped with imperfection—they certainly have no influence in making God the perfect Being he is, and therefore can impose upon him no necessity to produce them.

They are contingent in their nature. We can conceive them to be or not to be and to exist in one way rather than in another—there is nothing in them which involves necessity of being. Now if they be thus contingent, the reason of their existence,—the reason which moved God to produce them—cannot be necessary. If it were, then they would no longer be contingent but necessary.

They are not eternal, but were created in time. But if they occupied a necessary relation to God, so that the purpose to produce them flowed from his very nature, then their existence must be eternal. For God cannot be, even for a single moment, imperfect; in other words, he cannot, for a single instant, cease to be connected with those things which stand necessarily related to him. We conclude, therefore, that the moving cause of his decree was not necessary or natural;—that it did not proceed from that love which he has for himself, and that we are not to attribute to him liberty of spontaneity.

Scripture, which speaks in strong language of the liberty of the decree, calls it the good pleasure of God. "I will do all my pleasure," Is. xlvi. 10. "Our God is in the heavens: he hath done whatsoever he hath pleased," Ps. cxv. 3. He "worketh all things after the counsel of his own will," Eph. i. 11. He acts, therefore, in the full exercise of freedom and not from necessity of nature or from any ne-

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cessary reason in himself. It is unnecessary at present to say more on this subject or to apply ourselves to the removal of objections.

We may say in a word that neither fitness nor wisdom on the part of God is to be regarded as the moving cause of his decree. Not *fitness*, for he lay under no necessity to manifest his perfections. There was no reason why it became him to do so rather than not, for this is what we understand by fitness, otherwise it is an unmeaning term. But which of his perfections necessarily requires to be manifested? what can oblige him to give an exhibition of it? His perfections would not in the slightest degree be affected, even though he were to conceal all of them from the view of his creatures. The cause of the decree, therefore, was not fitness or propriety on the part of God. Neither are we to seek for it in his *wisdom*. It is true that he uniformly does what is best, because he acts wisely. But it does not follow from this that he acts necessarily, because nothing possesses the character of best, considered in reference to himself. That is best which either is necessary or which has reference to ourselves. We mean by necessary that which is so intimately connected with our own happiness that without it our happiness would not be complete. But another thing is best which has no reference to ourselves and which is such that we can do without it, and therefore we set ourselves freely to do it. But if we do it we act not from rash and blind impulse but from reasons which determine us to do so. But the circumstance of its being best imposes no necessity upon us to do it because it has no relation to ourselves. Best, in short, may be predicated of more things than one. But who will say whether the creation or non-creation of the world has more of the qualities of best?

It remains that we adopt the third system which holds that the moving cause in God was absolutely free. This liberty is usually called *libertas indifferentiæ* in contradistinction to *libertas spontaneitatis*. In ascribing the former to God, however, in decreeing, we are not to understand it as if it implied that he did so without any reason at all, and as if his mere good pleasure stood in the place of a reason. He never acts in this way. He is possessed of infinite wisdom and uniformly has wise reasons for what he does. But it is so called because there was no reason *compelling* him to decree, because he was not influenced by any internal reason. We admit that there was a reason in God for decreeing; for otherwise he could not have come to the resolution to make a decree, his will would have remained equally inclined to decree and not to decree. But we say

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that the reason was not necessary but free. The liberty of indifference excludes not freedom of acting but necessity only. It means that when God does any thing, he could at the same time not have done it, nay, that he could have done the very contrary. When therefore he determines to adopt a certain course, he does so for a certain reason, but not such a reason as imposes upon him a necessity to adopt that course. He could, as we have said, have refrained from doing so or he could have adopted a course directly opposite. Liberty is perfect when no reason arises from a regard either to our own happiness or to our own perfections obliging us to act in a certain way. And this is the liberty which belongs to God.

(3.) But was the decree of God formed from eternity or in time? and if from eternity, is this eternity the same as that of God himself?

We reply without hesitation that it was made before the world was, even before time properly so called, which did not begin before the creation of material objects which constitute the measure of time. Reason itself teaches us that God decreed before he created—that creation is the result of his decree. Scripture speaks in the same way and expressly declares that his decree was formed before the foundations of the world were laid. "According as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world," Eph. i. 4. "Whom he did foreknow them he did predestinate," Rom. viii. 29. "Known unto God are his works from the beginning of the world," Acts xv. 18.

Some divines, however, not contented with the simple statements of Scripture, have enquired further into the kind of eternity which is to be attributed to the divine decrees, and have asked whether it is to be viewed as absolute or restricted. Let it be borne in mind that there is a difference between these two—the former having no conceivable beginning—the latter having such a beginning, but one at the same time which cannot be fixed or determined.

Those who say that the moving cause of the decree is to be found in the nature of God himself, and who hold consequently that the decree is necessary, maintain, and that too in conformity to their system, that the eternity is absolute. For an essential and natural act of God cannot be separated from his nature, and therefore, on their hypothesis, it must be eternal in the same sense as God himself is. Those again who hold the liberty of God in decreeing, and who say that he was not determined by his own nature but that he freely determined himself, so that he could have decreed or not—they, we say, are not of one opinion on this subject. Some of them advocate the

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absolute eternity of the decrees, and maintain at the same time that it is quite reconcileable with perfect liberty. Others, again, as Gomarus and his numerous followers, could not reconcile the liberty of the divine decrees with their absolute eternity. The two ideas they held to be opposite and contradictory, and therefore they had recourse to a restricted eternity and said that God determined himself freely, that he is to be viewed as existing prior to his decree, and consequently that his decree is to be regarded as a free act which had its origin as a subject of thought in the divine mind.

We have no objections to those who hold the absolute eternity of the decrees if they can reconcile it with liberty as we have defined it. But we do not see how it is possible to reconcile the two, and therefore we think it is better to be silent on the subject and frankly to acknowledge our ignorance. If any find an insuperable difficulty in the idea of a restricted eternity (and it is not without its difficulties), yet the question if rightly considered may be adjusted in respect to those who maintain the liberty of the divine decree. We hold with them that the decree as a free act originated in the mind of God, but we hold at the same time that it was freely formed as soon as it was conceived—that between his determination to decree and the existence of the decree itself there was not even the least interval of time—that he stood in no need of deliberation—that he was not in a state of not decreeing before and in a state of decreeing afterwards, as if at any moment of time he had been without decrees, and afterwards made them and thus entertained a thought which had not previously been in his mind. But all these errors may be avoided, if we say that God formed the decree at the very instant that it was conceived. And therefore if any object to the notion of a restricted eternity, let them call it absolute, only let them distinguish between absolute eternity which is necessary and that which is free; or rather let them acknowledge that God was not determined by his own nature but that he determined himself freely to form his decree. Let them maintain the eternity of the decree, but let their idea of that eternity be agreeable to the nature of God. If they do this, they may adopt the view which seems to them preferable. Only let them keep in mind the distinction made between absolute and restricted eternity—the former having no conceivable beginning, and in consequence of its originating in the nature of God, necessary, and the latter having such a beginning but not eternal in the same sense as God himself is. If the question be settled in this way no one probably who insists upon the freedom of the decrees will be opposed to the notion

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of a restricted eternity. The proof of this eternity, in the sense in which we have explained it, is so clear, we think, that all will perceive it, and be constrained to admit that the ideas of liberty and of an eternity which is absolute cannot be reconciled.

It is not our intention to adduce many arguments in proof of our position. We shall refer only to the following.

In the *first* place, as a decree is a free act, which we here presuppose, it can have no necessary connection with the nature of God, but must be admitted to have been made by him in such a sense that he passed from a state of not decreeing to one of decreeing, and that the decree itself passed from possible to actual existence. For that which is *indifferently* free, as it is called, may either be or not be. The decree therefore was in a state of possibility. If it was not in such a state, it could not have been said that it could be or not be, or that it could have been otherwise, for to be and to be possible are contrary to each other. He who says that the decree is absolutely eternal affirms of it that it always existed, but he who says that it is free says that it might not have been and that therefore it may be affirmed that a decree had at one time no existence. It necessarily follows from this that a decree is free and so indifferently free that, as we have said, it cannot be called absolutely eternal or without a conceivable beginning, unless we suppose concerning the same thing that it has at once a possible and actual existence.

In the *second* place a free act is such that it is as a cause prior to its effects. But in this case it would be posterior. It cannot therefore be eternal like the essence of God, for then it could not be said that he freely determined to make it, whereas all the time it is an act of the will and a free effect. But if God freely determined, then unquestionably the act is also free, because it flows not from his nature but from his will and is formed by him. If it be formed by him, then it has its beginning in him, and having this beginning it is not absolutely eternal. If the decree, therefore, be regarded as a free action on the part of God, then the act of decreeing cannot be eternal as God himself is, but must have its commencement in the movement of his will.

All the objections urged against the opinion now advanced proceed from an erroneous view of the question. They are founded on the supposition that there was some interval between the eternity of God and that of his decree, as if he was undetermined at one time and formed his purpose at another. Whatever other mistaken opinions exist (and at present we shall not notice them) in regard to the free-

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dom of the decree, they all originate in the idea that God first existed and then formed his purpose; whereas, as we have already said, the decree is to be understood as having been formed at the very time at which he is conceived to exist, only it must be admitted that the decree was the act of his will freely determining itself.

(4.) We come now to the fourth question—the question namely as to the manner in which the decree was formed in the mind of God.

A decree is not a natural act on the part of God, but an act of his will freely determining itself. It proceeds indeed from a natural self-determining power in him, but it is not in itself an essential act. The power to decree is essential but not the decree itself. The decree accordingly is not of the essence of God, because it is a free act of his will and must not consequently be confounded with his nature. They speak inaccurately therefore or do not understand what they say or deny the freedom of the decree who affirm that the decree is God himself. Those who hold that the decree is freely made cannot confound it with God; because that which may or may not be does not belong to his nature. Now he forms his purpose because he wills to do so; but it cannot be said that he exists because he wills to exist and consequently the decree is not natural—it cannot be said to belong to his nature, for it exists because he wills it,—it cannot be said to be God himself. From this it will appear how incorrect it is to say what is in every one's mouth that God is a pure act, that he is every thing that may be. This is a contradiction in terms, for that which has a possible has not an actual existence.

God who is possessed of all power can produce more than he does, because his omnipotence is not exhausted. His decree is a free act and does not therefore belong to his nature, and although he may be in the state of decreeing, he is not naturally and of necessity so. It is not correct, moreover, to deny that those actions are free which proceed from the natural power of God, as if the act and the power to act were in him two separate and distinct things. Those who say that as a pure act he is every thing that exists have done so chiefly for the purpose of avoiding the error of those who ascribe to him accidental qualities—qualities, *i. e.*, which are superinduced from another quarter and which contribute to make up the perfection of which he is possessed. But a free action is not of this description. It is the result of an inherent power and, although in common with an accidental property it may or may not be, it has yet no effect in making him the perfect being he is. No addition is made by it to his excellence which is already infinite; it is only the effect of an

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exercise of the power which originally and naturally belongs to him.

A decree is an act which occupies the whole mind of God, the understanding and the will. In regard to the understanding it is an idea of possible things and a perception of ends and of means. It passes thence to the judgment by which its proportion and form, its end and means, are settled, and which combines, disposes, and arranges the ideas of these, and is at length completed by the will in the exercise of which God determines to give them being for these ends and by these means. The decree has thus its full form, inasmuch as it is the determination of the divine will.

We say that the decree is a simple and uncompounded act in God. It does not consist of a repetition of acts but is accomplished by one simple exercise of thought. We require a succession of acts in forming a purpose, in consequence of our inability to embrace all in a single act. But God is a perfect Being and by one mental act knows and determines all without being under the necessity of employing a successive series, for he is an uncompounded Being and liable therefore to no succession either in thought or action.

Notwithstanding all this however there are various orders and steps of the decree. These deserve to be noticed, inasmuch as the decree of God embraces various things which are perceived by us according to their nature and order. Some have the appearance of a cause, and others that of an end; some are regarded as means, while others are represented as antecedents or consequents.

Yet although such is the variety of the divine decrees, God must have comprehended them all in one act of his mind, whatever they were and whatever difference existed between them; for he cannot in decreeing confound causes, ends, means, antecedents, and consequents, but must conceive of them all, of whatever kind they may be, in one mental act. And hence it is plain that we are right in treating of the order of the decree, although the expressions which we employ in doing so are not to be understood as really conveying correct ideas of the subject but only as suited to our imperfect capacities.

The question then is not concerning the order and succession of thoughts in God, as if he decreed first one thing and then another, but concerning the order of the things themselves in our mind. This is a question of some importance and does not involve any thing that is at variance with the simplicity of God who by a single mental act comprehends the whole. What then is this order? On this subject

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there is a diversity of opinion among divines. But we pass over their controversies and say briefly

That the *first* thought had reference to the general end of all the works of God—the manifestation namely and recognition of his own perfections or what we call the glory of God. This general end was the first thing contemplated and was as it were the moving cause of all.

But the *second* thought had reference to the formation of the world and the creation of man with the view of manifesting his goodness, wisdom, power, &c.

That the *third* related to the permission of the fall and that too for wise ends.

That the *fourth* referred to man's deliverance from the fall. This last again was conceived in the following order.

There was *first* the consideration of the end in view, namely the manifestation of his glory and justice.

Then there was the contemplation of the general means for the attainment of that end—namely the sending of Christ into the world and the appointment of faith as a condition, his purpose being to save some men for the sake of Christ and to condemn others. This is what we call his *general* decree.

The first consideration had reference to a Mediator; then came that which related to the conditions and the bond of union to Christ —faith namely and love. This latter consideration, however, was irrespective of certain persons, which is the *general decree of predestination* and has reference to those who believe and follow after godliness. In this decree God gave Christ to the human race as Redeemer that they might be saved by him, and instituted a connection between faith and salvation and between unbelief and damnation.

In its *special* form he ordained particular and effectual grace, and he decreed that by it a certain number should believe and be saved, or he appointed those in whom the connection between faith and salvation or between unbelief and damnation should be found, or he marked out for some salvation in Christ and denied that salvation to others. This is the special decree or election.

Such is the natural order of the divine decree or rather of the things decreed. This is shewn by the execution of the decree. For of whatever kind be the objects comprehended in it, and in whatever way they succeed each other in time so they all were in the mind of God in the precise order in which they are evolved. He

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could not regard them otherwise than they are and occur. His decree is thus an uncompounded well arranged act.

We add that the divine decree was a single act and was formed from eternity to the exclusion of all subsequent appointments. When we say that it was a single act, we mean that the whole decree was made from eternity, and that no room was left for decrees to be made in time.

This opinion is opposed chiefly by Socinians who say that there were only three eternal decrees—those, namely, which related to the creation of the world, to the mission of Christ, and to the salvation of believers and condemnation of unbelieving and impenitent sinners,—and that those which refer to such actions as are free were made in time according to circumstances and the conduct of men or as necessity required.

This opinion is opposed by the unity of the decree, by which we mean, as we have seen and explained, that it was made at one and the same instant and before the foundations of the world were laid.

Scripture declares that all God's works are manifest or (as the word denotes) known to him from the beginning, Acts xv. 18; and that he "worketh all things after the counsel of his own will," Eph. i. 11.

The divine decree embraces every thing that exists in time, for it was formed before the foundation of the world. Being formed then, and extending to every particular, there can be no occasion for other and new decrees. If there were, then the decree would not be universal, which however we have proved it to be. Besides, this idea of decrees in time would destroy the simplicity of the divine nature, for then God would determine upon some new act, there would be an accession to his knowledge. But he knows no such succession as belongs to our minds, who continually cherish new thoughts and perform fresh actions. The decree therefore is one and was made *simul et semel*, nor are there any of the divine purposes which received their being in time.

The act of the decree is absolute not uncertain or doubtful. It is not suspended on any condition on the part of man. The Remonstrants say that it is and distinguish the divine decrees into *absolute* and *conditional*. Of the former, according to them, there are only the three already specified, and these are also eternal. The rest which relate to individuals, to their actions, and to their destiny, they call *conditional*, because the execution of them depends on the performance or non-performance of some condition by the persons themselves. They hold that God simply determined what the creatures

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ought or ought not to do in time without fixing what they would really do and what their condition in eternity would be. They maintain that he decreed the salvation of some and the damnation of others only conditionally,—*If thou believest thou shalt be saved; if not thou shalt be damned.* This condition was suspended on the liberty of these individuals respectively and was not definitely ordained by God. They thus deny the absolute and unconditional nature of those decrees which refer to particular persons.

Now although we do not hold this, we do not deny that God in his decree instituted a universal connection between faith and salvation, and that he determined what the creatures ought to do if they wished to be happy. This we call his general decree. But we say, moreover, that there is also a special decree—that God determined what the creatures would do and what their condition would be—who should believe and who should not—and that his decree regarding them and every thing relating to them was absolute. This does not imply that his decree was made without any regard to means. Means are intimately connected with a proposed end, and he who desires to attain the latter desires also to employ the former. And thus God who settled the condition of his creatures fixed also upon the means for bringing it about. His decree is not so absolute as that whatever he may do with the creature he may do without means. But it is equally plain that God has willed his decree in regard to particular persons endued with liberty to be also absolute and not conditional only. We may easily be persuaded of this if we consider the arguments of our opponents in favour of conditional decrees. We shall observe this order in what follows with the view of refuting these arguments, turning them against those who use them, and confirming the opinion which we hold.

One of their arguments in favour of conditional decrees is founded on the conditional propositions contained in Scripture. *If thou believest thou shalt be saved. Whosoever believeth shall not perish.* These and similar propositions they say, being conditional, prove that the decree is also conditional, because the former cannot be at variance with and different from the latter.

We admit the whole of this argument but we deny that it necessarily follows that no decree is absolute. Even in regard to a matter which is conditionally stated the propositions are conditional; they are no doubt conditions of the divine decrees and are in themselves true, but they are conditions of a part not of the whole of the decree. There is a decree by which God has fixed what is condi-

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tionally proposed—whether, namely, the creature will fulfil the condition or not. We maintain that this also as we shall see immediately forms part of God's eternal purpose. From these conditional propositions therefore no argument can be drawn against our theory.

But we may turn the argument against those who make use of it and draw from it one in favour of our own opinion. Our argument is this, that those things which are conditionally proposed in Scripture appear from other places to have been absolutely settled in respect of futurition as what should assuredly take place. We shall give two examples in illustration and proof of this.

The one refers to Eli the high priest. The prophet who was sent to him spoke thus, "Wherefore the Lord God of Israel saith, I said indeed that thy house and the house of thy father should walk before me for ever: but now the Lord saith, Be it far from me," 1 Sam. ii. 30. He thus gave Eli to understand that if he had been careful in keeping the law the priesthood would have been continued in his family for ever, but that now it would not. This condition, however, could not have been and would not be fulfilled. It was fixed that the priesthood should not continue in the family of Eli, because it had been absolutely promised to the posterity of Phinehas, Numb. xxv. 13. Two of the sons of Aaron were Eleazar and Ithamar, from the latter of whom Eli was descended. And as God had promised that the son of Eleazar and his seed after him should have the covenant of an everlasting priesthood, it followed that the priesthood could not remain in the family of Eli inasmuch as he sprang from Ithamar, but that it would return to the family of Eleazar from whom it was for a season transferred to him. The condition therefore could not be fulfilled by Eli because that which was apparently suspended upon it had been absolutely decreed, even that the priesthood should continue in another family than his own.

The other example refers to Saul. Samuel told him that if he had kept the commandment of the Lord his kingdom would have been established for ever, but that because he had rejected the word of the Lord the Lord had rejected him from being king, 1 Sam. xiii. 13; xv. 23. Yet it had been decreed that the kingdom should continue not in his family, but in the tribe of Judah, Gen. xlix. 10. But Saul, as is well known, belonged to the tribe of Benjamin and not to that of Judah. The conditional promise therefore, as is evident from another place, had been absolutely determined, so that it does not follow that because certain propositions or statements are conditional, the whole decree is conditional too.

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Another of the arguments of our opponents is this, that almost all propositions are expressly conditional, and that even those which are absolute contain an implied condition and are no proof that the decree is absolute. We admit that some absolute propositions do imply a condition, but these propositions relate as we have seen only to a part of the decree. Neither do we regard as conditions of the divine decree all that we meet with as such in the writings of the prophets. The statements which they make and which seem to be conditional are sometimes to be considered only in the light of natural consequences. We give two instances of these.

Jonah declared to the Ninevites that in forty days they and their city would be destroyed, Jon. iii. 4 ; while yet they were saved upon their repentance. This was an implied condition of their salvation, but it was also the result of the divine threatening.

When Hezekiah was sick unto death, he was told that he should "die, and not live," Is. xxxviii. 1. There was here, it is said, an implied condition that he would live if he repented. But the prophet does not say what God had decreed, but what would be the natural consequence of the disease under which Hezekiah laboured, if there was no miraculous interposition on the part of God in his behalf. "Thou shalt die," *i. e.* thy disease is incurable except by an extraordinary exercise of divine power. There is here therefore no declaration to Hezekiah of the divine decree, but only a statement by the prophet of the natural consequence of his disease. And even though it is to be viewed as referring to the purpose and determination of God, still it is an unfolding only of a part and not of the whole of that purpose.

Their principal argument however—that which is the very heart and foundation of their system—is this, that the doctrine we are now endeavouring to establish takes away human liberty. An absolute decree, they say, by which God has determined what will be does not leave man at liberty to act. He is placed under a law of necessity —a necessity inconsistent with freedom of will, for we cannot be said to do freely what we are compelled to do. To this we reply

(.) Liberty is not absolute and independent, as we shall afterwards shew, but subject to God and to his providence and his direction. Our actions cannot be set loose from his authority and government, which would be the case if our liberty were such as they suppose it to be.

(..) We deny that the certainty of an event interferes with our liberty. And if it does not, our hypothesis is untouched. A decree

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determines nothing more than the certainty of an event. God purposes that it shall happen so as to leave our freedom unimpaired. The only question therefore is

Can the actions which we freely perform be in the mind of God certainly future? This our adversaries deny. But if it be the case that they are not, then unquestionably we must give up the foreknowledge of God, all the predictions contained in his word, and every thing which bears witness to our liberty. We have already proved the foreknowledge of God, and those who are opposed to us admit that he possesses this attribute. Now foreknowledge assuredly takes for granted the certainty that an event will happen, for that which is not certainly future cannot be foreknown as such. This is self-evident. As therefore our actions may be thus certain without affecting our liberty to act, so may the decree of God be held to be absolute while our freedom at the same time remains entire; because as we have said that decree determines only that a thing shall certainly happen.

We now turn this argument against our opponents and say that the very things which depend on human liberty are, as is evident from another source, absolutely and certainly determined by God. Thus all that was done by the Jews in regard to Christ is said to have been determined before by the hand and the counsel of God, Acts ii. 23; iv. 27, 28, and yet they were all the time exercising their own liberty. Arguments therefore cannot be drawn from our free actions against the absolute nature of the divine decrees.

We remark again that the purpose or decree of God is *immutable*. A few words on this subject will suffice, because it is admitted by all. When our opponents speak of the mutability of the decree, they are to be understood as holding not that the decree is changed (for this they do not affirm), but that it is not always carried into execution, and this in their estimation is a conditional decree. Such a decree, if the condition be not fulfilled, cannot be executed. And thus God who has willed, but conditionally, the salvation of an individual may afterwards be said not to will it, if that individual has not implemented the condition, and this according to them is not God's changing his will or decree, but only his acting according to the condition of the decree. But as we maintain that the decrees are absolute, there can be in them no change whatever.

The immutability of the decree is evident. (.) From the unchangeable nature of God himself. With him there is "no variableness neither shadow of turning," James i. 17. "My counsel shall stand,"

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Is. xlvi. 10. "The gifts and calling of God are without repentance," Rom. xi. 29. (..) Because there is no reason in God why he should change his decree. The reason for doing so is ignorance in him who makes it, or fickleness and inconstancy of disposition or a want of power to carry it into execution. But as God is omnipotent and omniscient and in his nature ever the same, there can certainly be no reason in him why he should alter his purpose. And hence his decree is called sure.

CHAPTER XVII.

PREDESTINATION.

PRELIMINARY REMARKS—NAMES GIVEN TO THE DOCTRINE—GENERAL, SPECIAL—PREDESTINATION—ELECTION AND REPROBATION—PREDESTINATION VIEWED IN TWO ASPECTS, GENERAL AND SPECIAL—DEFINITION OF GENERAL PREDESTINATION—ITS END AND MEANS—PROOF FROM SCRIPTURE—SUPRALAPSARIAN AND SUBLAPSARIAN VIEW.

We come now to treat of that part of the divine decree which relates to the final condition of men,—whether that condition be one of happiness or of misery—of eternal life or of eternal death,—and which is called predestination.

It is necessary to prosecute our enquiries on this subject with wisdom and prudence, in sobermindedness and humility, dispassionately, and without violating the spirit of unity and brotherly love.

We have to do in this enquiry with the "secret things" which belong to God, Deut. xxix. 29,—with that "depth" of which Paul speaks in such strong terms of admiration, Rom. xi. 33;—with the "face" of God which no man has seen, and the sight of which was denied to Moses himself. God said to the patriarch that he would make all his goodness to pass before him and that he would shew mercy on whom he would shew mercy, Exod. xxxiii. 19. These words are applied by Paul to the decree of Predestination, Rom. ix. 18. And what is their import? What but that that part of his decree is veiled in impenetrable obscurity from the eye of man? "I will have mercy on whom I will have mercy," *i. e.*, this is my doing. In regard to all that relates to him beyond what he has been pleased to reveal, we are to abstain from entering on curious search.

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The decree of predestination does not relate to the way of salvation made known to us in the gospel, but to the secret things of God.

No one certainly will be condemned because he has been predestinated, but because he has neglected the method of salvation which God has disclosed and therefore it is unnecessary to be immoderately anxious in regard to this mysterious doctrine.

Scripture besides speaks of it but seldom and with great moderation. Its main object is to explain the plan of mercy which it reveals, and it only at times and cursorily alludes to the decree of predestination.

The subject is encompassed with difficulties, so that on both sides much may be said. And much has been said. Heathens, Mahommedans, and Christians have entered the arena of debate; and the time is yet far distant when we may expect the controversy to be brought to a close.

It is a doctrine profitable only to believers. It is not fitted for effecting the conversion of men; it is fitted rather to excite prejudices against godliness. We are not, however, to be altogether silent regarding it, for as we have said the consideration of it is profitable to believers. Nor does Scripture absolutely forbid us to speak of it. Still it must be handled not in a spirit of presumption nor in the presence of those who are incapable of receiving it.

With these preliminary remarks we proceed to consider

I. The names given to this doctrine.

II. The doctrine itself.

I. The names given to the doctrine are *general* and *special*. Inasmuch as it embraces both those who shall be saved and those who shall perish it is called predestination. The word used in the original to express it is προορίζω (Rom. viii. 29, 30), a compound of ὁρίζω which properly signifies to confine a body within certain limits and hence to fix or settle any thing either in thought or in act.

When it has reference to the mind, it denotes a purpose formed to do something: when it has reference to the act it signifies to prove a thing by certain arguments and thus to put an end to controversy and debate. It is used in the latter sense in regard to Christ, who is said to have been "declared (ὁρισθέντος) to be the Son of God with power according to the Spirit of holiness by the resurrection from the dead," Rom. i. 4. But it is also employed in Scripture to denote a purpose formed in the mind. "And he commanded us to preach unto the people and to testify that it is he which was ordained of God (ὡρισμένος ὑπὸ τοῦ Θεοῦ) to be the Judge of quick and dead," Acts x. 42.

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"Because he hath appointed a day, in the which he will judge the world in righteousness by that man whom he hath ordained (ὡρισε)," Acts xvii. 31. It signifies also a fixed and settled purpose to perform an action. But the prepositions πρὸ and *præ* with which the Greek and Latin words respectively are compounded do not refer simply to an external act, for the purpose of intimating that the decree is made before the object contemplated by it is effected. This would be trifling in the extreme and utterly destitute of force. They must be understood as pointing backwards to the foundation of the world. Scripture refers to this period when it says that believers are chosen in Christ before the foundation of the world, Eph. i. 4. In like manner the names of those who are to be saved are said to be written in the book of life from the foundation of the world, Rev. xiii. 8; xvii. 8.

The word, however, refers not only to those who shall be saved but also to those who shall perish. It was restricted to the former by the early fathers, who understood it to denote the will of God or his purpose formed in time to do something. But as he does not in time cause either the unbelief or destruction of men, the blame of which is not his but their own, we consider it as referring to his will or purpose regarding what was to happen in time and consequently to those who should perish—as denoting not only that he should condemn unbelievers and deliver them over to destruction, but also that he should withhold from some that efficacious and particular grace on which faith and salvation depend. This is the act of his will on which are suspended the condemnation and ruin of the impenitent. Predestination, therefore, has reference to them as well as to those who are to be saved. Although Scripture does not employ the word in this sense it is nevertheless used in regard to divine purposes which are intimately connected with the final condition of unbelievers. Thus it is said that Christ must suffer "as it was determined," Luke xxii. 22; and that the Jews did whatsoever the hand and the counsel of God "determined before to be done," Acts iv. 28.

The particular names given to this doctrine are those of *election* and *reprobation*,—the former referring to those who shall be saved, the latter, to those who shall perish.

Election is a word frequently to be met with in the word of God. Rom. ix. 11; xi. 5; 1 Thess. i. 4; 2 Pet. i. 10. It properly signifies the separation or choice of a certain number from among a multitude, all of whom are placed in the same circumstances, and the appointment or ordination of that number, in the exercise of the good pleasure of him by whom the appointment is made, to a state

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of glory and blessedness. It supposes that all men were originally in precisely the same situation, that they were all chargeable with guilt and lying under condemnation.

This separation or choice may be viewed in relation either to the mind of him by whom the choice is made or the act itself. When considered in the former light it denotes the decree, and thus the choice was made from eternity, Eph. i. 4. When regarded as the act itself, it points to the time when by the efficacious grace of God a sinner is brought to Christ and united to him. This latter election is the actual separation of a man by faith and repentance from those who still continue in sin.

It signifies a choice by which a sinner is introduced into a better and happier state. Hence we are said to be called to "his kingdom and glory," 1 Thess. ii. 12;—to be called "to glory and virtue," 2 Pet. i. 3.

It signifies a choice which is efficacious, a choice by which the individual who is the object of it is delivered by a powerful arm from a state of misery and introduced into one of happiness.

It intimates moreover that the origin of this choice is to be sought for in the good pleasure of him who makes the choice. For he is represented as predestinating "according to the good pleasure of his will," Eph. i. 5. He is said also to have chosen the people of the Jews, because it was agreeable to his own will and pleasure, Deut. vii. 7, 8.

The other special name given to predestination is *reprobation*. This however is not a Scriptural term; it is never used in the word of God in this sense. We find indeed the word reprobate employed, which simply denotes *refused—not chosen*. Thus God says of Israel, "Thou art my servant; I have chosen thee and not cast thee away," *i. e.* I have not despised nor rejected thee, Is. xli. 9. It is not employed in Scripture, however, in the sense which it now bears, *i. e.* the leaving of some men in a state of sin. The word was first used in the ninth century,* and at a subsequent period by the scholastic writers. There is no reason why it should be rejected. Scripture, though not using the word itself, employs language of a similar import. God is represented, for instance, as hating Esau, Rom. ix. 13. Its meaning however is not negative only, but positive also. God has purposed by a positive act of his will, not only to

* See Mosheim, vol. i. page 206. Blackie and Fullarton, Glasgow, 1827.

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condemn unbelievers, but also to withhold from some sufficient grace, on which withholding, as we shall see when we come to treat of the doctrine of reprobation, depends the final ruin of the impenitent.

But leaving the names given to this doctrine let us now consider

II. The doctrine itself. There are two aspects in which it may be viewed.

1. *A posteriori*, or as it relates to the divine procedure towards men in time.

2. *A priori*, or as it relates to the eternal purpose of God.

1. We shall begin with the former of these or with the providence of God as exercised in time. This seems to be a safer course than to begin with the latter though it have the precedence in the order of time, because whatever God does in time, that he determined from eternity to do. All his works are known to him from the beginning. He worketh all things after the counsel of his own will. We must therefore examine his works in providence in order to come to a conclusion regarding his eternal counsel and decree.

In considering these works as they relate to the final salvation or destruction of men, we observe on the authority of Scripture that there are two and only two ultimate conditions in one or other of which they will be placed—a condition of happiness, namely, or a condition of misery. These are called respectively *life* and *destruction*, Matt. vii. 13, 14;—*life eternal* and *everlasting punishment*, Matt. xxv. 46;—*the resurrection of life* and *the resurrection of damnation*, John v. 29.

In regard to these two final states we observe that they are reached by two ways or roads; the one, *i. e.* the way of faith and love leading to life, and the other or the way of unbelief leading to destruction. Our Lord makes mention of these ways and calls the former "narrow" and the latter "broad," Matt. vii. 13, 14. And Scripture uniformly declares that those who believe "shall be saved," and that those who believe not "shall be damned," Mark xvi. 16; John iii. 36.

We observe further, that these two ways which men follow are under the providence and direction of God in such a sense that he communicates his grace which is necessary in order to the attainment of salvation. This grace is of a twofold kind—*common*, namely, and *particular* and *efficacious*.

Common grace, of which even those who shall perish partake, consists in the offer of Christ made in the Gospel, an offer which is intended by God to be made to all, and in which no one at least is ex-

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cluded. In addition to this offer there is communicated a certain moral inward grace to which we shall advert more particularly when we come to treat of effectual calling.

But besides this *common* grace there is *particular* and *efficacious* grace which is bestowed only on some, and which is so intimately connected with salvation, that it begets faith in those to whom it is given, *i. e.* in the elect. This grace, as we shall afterwards shew, is irresistible.

But it is asked whether this be consistent with the perfections of God—with his justice, goodness, and wisdom. There is reason especially to doubt that he deals unequally with men, all of whom are in precisely the same situation of unworthiness, wretchedness, and guilt, when he confers on some of them only common grace, while he bestows particular and efficacious grace on others. Such procedure savours of partiality and injustice.

We say that this unequal distribution of grace is in no way inconsistent with the *justice* of God and does not imply that he has a respect to men's persons.

All men are equally undeserving of the grace of God, and therefore he cannot be charged with injustice in withholding from some that to which none have a right.

In conferring grace he may act according to his own pleasure, for none can lay claim to what he bestows. In this matter he acts as supreme Lord, who may do what he will with his own, and not as a Judge who has a regard to the merit or demerit of those with whom he has to do. In the latter case there would be some ground for the charge of partiality and injustice; but in the former there is none.

That there can be no possible colour for such a charge is proved by the fact that men abuse the common grace bestowed upon them. If they made a right improvement of that, they might entertain the hope of receiving special grace. But they render themselves unworthy of a greater favour by their misimprovement of the less, and therefore no injustice is done when God withholds it from them.

Besides he cannot be said to be unjust, because he renders to every one according to his works, and because, as Scripture says, to whom much is given, from them also much shall be required. We cannot now enter on an explanation of this. But we know generally that God will in his dealings strictly adhere to this rule.

Neither is this unequal distribution of grace inconsistent with his *goodness*.

This divine perfection is not absolute and without bounds, but is

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exercised in wisdom and in harmony with his other attributes. What the limits of that perfection are we know not, and therefore we cannot determine whether it require that all in this matter be treated alike and be made partakers of the same grace. But as it is exercised in a manner agreeable to his other perfections, the unequal distribution of special grace cannot be regarded as contrary to his goodness. And the less so on this ground, that he will sometime or other and in many ways manifest and vindicate his goodness. Of the time and way in which he will do this we are ignorant. But we know generally that he is good, and that when he thinks best he will furnish an illustration of this perfection which will carry conviction to every mind.

But is this unequal communication of grace in harmony with the *wisdom* of God, which requires that he have certain reasons why he purposes so to act?

He has his reasons though they are unknown to us. In this matter certainly he does not act arbitrarily, but on good grounds confers special grace on some and denies it to others. We shall advert to this point more particularly when we treat of regeneration. Let what has been now said suffice regarding the method of God's dealing with men in respect of their salvation and destruction.

2. We said that the doctrine may be viewed *a priori* or in its reference to the eternal purpose of God. As it is evident from what has already been stated that he acts in two ways with men—the one of which refers to the saving of some and the condemning of others —the other to the communication of common grace to both, and to the bestowing only upon some of that special grace which is connected with faith, we may readily conclude that the decree of predestination is agreeable to this twofold result; or, to speak more correctly, that there are two parts of the divine decree, the one more general, the other more special.

The former of these has reference to the work of God in saving some and in condemning others, the latter, to the unequal distribution of grace.

We may call the former the *general* purpose of God and the latter his *special* purpose. But if any prefer calling this counsel or purpose general and special predestination, it is the same to us, for we are not disputing about the name. It is designated in Scripture *will, counsel, purpose;* but as it is now commonly called predestination, we may retain the word and apply it to both parts of the divine counsel.

Hence arises the division into predestination

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(*a.*) General and
(*b.*) Special.

(*a.*) In treating of *general* predestination we shall

I. Explain,

II. Prove, and

III. Speak of the place which it holds in the order of the decrees, and advert to the opinions held on this point by the Supralapsarians and Sublapsarians.

I. In regard to the explanation we premise this definition. *General predestination is the eternal and immutable determination of the will of God by which he has purposed to save some of the human race and to condemn others, without any regard to their persons, and with this view to offer to all without distinction grace to believe and to repent, and to inculcate this upon all as their duty.*

This decree therefore is properly speaking nothing else than a general combination of ends and means or a connection between faith and salvation and between unbelief and destruction—a general purpose without regard to any particular persons, and therefore all that is required in order to understand this decree is a knowledge of the ends and the means.

The end in respect to God is his own glory, the manifestation of his justice and mercy in saving some and condemning others.

In reference to men it is the salvation or eternal life of those who believe, and the eternal destruction of the impenitent and unbelieving.

The means in regard to salvation are faith in Christ, and in regard to destruction unbelief and impenitence.

This is the simple view of the whole of the general decree—a connection, and that generally without respect to persons, between faith and salvation and unbelief and final ruin.

In order to understand this decree it is further necessary to bear in mind that God did not in forming it design the salvation of all men but only of believers, and of all such without distinction.

By this decree God has excluded none in the proposition "he that believeth shall be saved," as if any individual who believes may be condemned and not saved. Such a proposition is employed because a connection has been instituted between faith and salvation, and therefore it has reference also to those who are not saved.

By this decree, moreover, God does not design, by what is called a positive act of his will, that all shall believe. In this case all would

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believe. For whatever he positively wills, that he also accomplishes by suitable means. He wills only negatively, inasmuch as he does not will that any should not believe. On the other hand, he wills by an act of his will exercised in commanding and approving that all to whom the general proposition is addressed should believe. This is a simple view of the general decree in all its extent. And hence we may see how perverse and invidious is the conduct of those who endeavour to confound this doctrine with that of the Arminians or Remonstrants.

In our system there is, in addition to the general, a special decree which the Remonstrants deny, who insist upon the general decree alone.

The general decree of predestination is something else than the general decree which they hold. For, according to them, God intended directly the salvation of all; whereas, according to our system, he intended the salvation not of all men but only of believers.

According to them, too, God intended to give faith to all to whom the general proposition should be made. He is therefore defeated in his intention if men do not believe. But the act of believing is left to themselves, so that they may or may not believe. According to our system, however, God, without respect of persons, has only instituted a general connection between faith and salvation. He does not will that men should not believe; on the contrary, he commands them to do so, and also seriously intends the salvation of those who believe. This view of the matter is assuredly widely different from the opinion held by the Remonstrants. We shall shew in a subsequent part of the work how this doctrine harmonizes with the doctrine regarding the special decree. In the meantime let us proceed

II. To prove it or to shew that it rests on a sufficiently solid foundation.

Before doing so, however, and in order to understand correctly the point in dispute between us and our opponents, let us ascertain precisely the state of the question.

The question then is whether there be a connection between faith and salvation and whether that connection be general or particular. It is admitted by all that there is a connection; but it is commonly held that it refers to the elect and to them alone: whereas, according to our system, this connection is general and has no reference to the elect, or the reprobate, or any particular persons.

The question is whether the Scriptural declaration "he that believeth shall be saved" refers also to those who do not believe and are

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not saved; so that those who hear or read that declaration should regard it as having reference to them, and conclude that they also are comprehended under it, and that if they believe they also shall be saved. This is the opinion which we hold; but some deny that it has reference to any except the elect.

The question is whether faith is required by the will of God from all who hear or read the declaration "he that believeth shall be saved" —whether, we say, God may in truth and seriousness demand from those who are not saved that they believe that declaration and apply it to themselves. Our opponents deny this and hold that it pertains to the elect alone and that God can require them alone to believe.

The question, moreover, is whether in particular election and reprobation man is viewed simply as created and fallen, or also as placed in a state in which, as far as it respects God, salvation is possible, and not in a state like that of the Devil and his angels and lost souls, in which salvation is no longer possible. Those who hold the absolute nature of the decree of reprobation say that the subjects of that decree were not considered by God as placed in such a state, because he absolutely and eternally appointed them to destruction. Our opinion is that God did view them in this light—so that the declaration "he that believeth shall be saved" has a reference to all, and that God has made a distinction between them in giving, out of his mere good pleasure, special grace to some, and in the exercise of wisdom and justice in denying it to others. This we call *special predestination.*

Having thus defined the state of the question we go on to prove the doctrine of general predestination, and with this view adduce the following arguments.

1. Scripture, in some places, speaks with sufficient distinctness of a certain divine counsel or purpose regarding the salvation of men, which is distinct, however, from the special decree and cannot be understood as the decree of election and reprobation. We read, for instance, that "the Pharisees and lawyers rejected the counsel of God against themselves," Luke vii. 30. What counsel was this? Was it the absolute special decree? No one certainly will affirm this, because that decree is uniformly put in execution and cannot be rejected by men. Was it such counsel as one friend gives another? The counsel of God according to the style of Scripture is his wise purpose regarding the salvation of men, and this is what is meant by the word in the passage quoted above. Our Lord says that John came to proclaim the kingdom of heaven and to urge men

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to receive the counsel which the Pharisees rejected. There is therefore a general purpose on the part of God to save those who believe —a purpose which had reference also to those who rejected it. The decree, however, is so well known to be designated by this name that we need not condescend upon proofs.

2. Paul tells the elders of Ephesus in his farewell address that he had not shunned to declare unto them "all the counsel of God," Acts xx. 27. But this was not the special decree, for it is known to none, it has been hidden from eternity. It was the general purpose of God as to the connection between faith and salvation in Christ. This was what Paul declared to the Ephesians and what he here calls the "counsel of God." He made known to them the way to eternal life and the proposition to which we have already adverted, namely "he that believeth shall be saved." But it called also "the will" of God.

3. There is one passage worthy of particular notice, because it makes mention both of the general and special decree, and gives to both the name of "the will" of God, John vi. 39, 40. In the former of these verses our Lord refers to the special decree when he says, "this is the Father's will which hath sent me that of all which he hath given me I should lose nothing." In the latter he refers to the general decree, *i. e.* "the will of him that sent me, that every one which seeth the Son and believeth on him may have everlasting life." In the former, we say, he speaks of the special or particular decree by which God chose some and gave them to Christ to be redeemed by him; in the latter, he speaks of the general decree by which God instituted a connection between faith in Christ and salvation.

4. We read again that God hath saved us "according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began. But is now made manifest by the appearing of our Saviour Jesus Christ," 2 Tim. i. 9, 10. What purpose and grace is this? Unquestionably it is the will of God in reference to the connection between faith and salvation and the determination to save those who believe. It is not the special decree by which he chose one or did not choose another to eternal life; for this decree cannot be made manifest in Christ, but only his purpose to offer grace to all.

5. Even the conditional propositions contained in Scripture serve to confirm the doctrine which we are now endeavouring to prove, "God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish but have everlasting life," John iii. 16. "He that believeth and is baptized shall be

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saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned," Mark xvi. 16. "To him give all the prophets witness, that through his name whosoever believeth in him shall receive remission of sins," Acts x. 43. "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and thou shalt be saved," Acts xvi. 31. "For Christ is the end of the law to every one that believeth. That if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved. For the Scripture hath said, Whosoever believeth on him shall not be ashamed," Rom. x. 4, 9, 11. We meet with many such propositions as these in the word of God. Now there is a divine decree of precisely the same character as these general and conditional propositions. The truth of them is certain—they are agreeable to the will of God, and thus give us an exact representation of what his will really is. He cannot unfold his will so as to make it appear different from what it is—he cannot think one thing and purpose another, and therefore there must be a general and conditional purpose. But the special decree is not of this kind, and no such proposition having reference to it can be made; for the proposition must correspond in character and extent with the decree itself. We must either deny, therefore, that there are propositions of the purpose of God or hold that there is a general and conditional purpose. But how can we make such a denial, seeing that the propositions cannot but be agreeable to the will of God? And if they are agreeable, then, of whatever kind they may be, there is a will or purpose corresponding to them.

6. It is the will of God that those to whom the proposition of the Gospel is made should receive that declaration and apply it to themselves. Now this proposition, *i. e.*, "he that believeth shall be saved," is made indiscriminately to all, even to those who do not believe and who are not saved, and therefore according to the will of God it has reference to all to whom it is made. If this be not admitted then we cannot hold that God seriously wills that all men should receive the proposition made to them. If, however, he does so will, then it must have reference to all who read or hear it, and the purpose by which he has ordained a connexion between faith and salvation must be general. We are aware, indeed, that there is a particular connection which has reference only to the elect; yet this proposition is made to all without distinction. For it would be absurd to suppose that God says to all believe and ye shall be saved and yet that he does not will that they should believe and be saved. But we have said the offer is made to all by those who preach the gospel, who,

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though they know not who are elected and who are reprobate, yet proclaim the offer in the universal terms in which it is made in Scripture. If however it be said that, although the proposition be addressed to all, there is not a general purpose on the part of God and that he does not will that those who are not elected should believe that the proposition applies to them, what is this but treating them with mockery? Is not this, on God's part, a representation or unfolding of his will different from what his will really is? But the simplicity and the truth of God forbid us believing that he would do so. Our Lord expressly says to Jerusalem "how often would I have gathered thy children together, ... and ye would not," Matt. xxiii. 37. God says of his vineyard "wherefore, when I looked that it should bring forth grapes, brought it forth wild grapes," Is. v. 4. If therefore we would not impugn the sincerity of God we must hold that there is a general decree by which he has purposed to save them that believe.

7. Scripture assures us that the love of God towards men as such is universal—that he has "no pleasure in the death of him that dieth"—that he "will have all men to be saved and to come unto the knowledge of the truth"—that he is "not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance," Ezek. xviii. 32; 1 Tim. ii. 4; 2 Pet. iii. 9. From these passages we infer that there is a general will or purpose of God held forth in the gospel by which he has linked together faith and salvation without excluding any man, and declares that it is agreeable to him that all should believe and live. If this be denied then it follows that he absolutely willed that some should perish and that, according to his good pleasure, the proposition "he that believeth shall be saved" should not apply to them. What becomes, in this case, of his universal love? What are we to make of the passages in which he declares that he willeth not the death of the sinner, that he will have all men to be saved?

8. If the proposition refer, as some say, only to the elect, then it will necessarily follow

(*a.*) That faith cannot be required from those to whom it is made but to whom it does not apply. How can I be called to believe a statement which has no relation to myself? But all to whom the gospel is addressed are required to believe and therefore the proposition refers to all.

(*b.*) Another necessary consequence will be that those who do not believe are not chargeable with sin. For how can they be said to sin in not receiving a proposition which has no reference to them, which

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was not designed to apply to them? Is not this opposed alike to the nature of God and to the statements of Scripture? But they who do not believe are guilty of sin as well as those who disobey the gospel. "If I had not come and spoken unto them," Christ says, "they had not had sin," John xv. 22. "The Spirit," he says again, will reprove the world "of sin, because they believe not on me," John xvi. 9. Did not the Pharisees commit sin, when they rejected the counsel of God against themselves? Therefore

(*c.*) If men do not sin in not believing the proposition they cannot justly be punished for their unbelief. Yet they are punished and most severely punished for rejecting the counsel of God; and therefore it is manifest that the proposition applies also to those who do not receive it and who are not saved.

9. If the connexion between faith and salvation have not a reference to all without distinction to whom the proposition of that connexion is made, then it evidently follows that those to whom it does not refer must be regarded by God as already in the same position as devils and as those who after death are for ever lost. There would be no difference between them. Salvation would be impossible to the former as it is to the latter. But such a conclusion is contrary alike to reason and Scripture which teach us that man while here is in a state in which salvation is possible—that there is a difference between his situation in this world and that in which he will be placed after death—that, while in eternity he will be hopelessly condemned and lost, he has now an opportunity of repentance, a season of grace in which God may be found and salvation secured. But this would not be true in regard to those who perish if there were not a general purpose, if they were considered even in this life as lost. Can it be reasonably supposed that God should offer grace to such and couple that offer with a command to receive it—that he should say to them at the very time when he looks upon them as if they were already in the place of woe, *believe and ye shall be saved?* And yet this must be supposed, if there be not a general purpose.

10. If there be not a general purpose or decree—if it be denied that there is a universal connexion between faith and salvation, it follows that those who believe cannot be in any other way certain that they will be saved although they believe. Unless we hold that God wills to save all who believe, how can I be assured that I will be saved if I believe? The proposition which makes me certain of this must therefore be universal, *whosoever believes shall be saved,—if I believe I will be saved.* If however we make the major term parti-

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cular and say, *some believers or the elect will be saved, therefore I by believing will be saved,* who does not see that such a conclusion is unwarrantable? In order to draw such a conclusion the proposition must be general as it really is, and I can do so safely because on such a proposition all truth is certain and rests on a sure foundation. Our Lord reasoned in this way "Of all whom the Father hath given to me I shall lose nothing," John vi. 40. "Ask and it shall be given you," &c., "for every one that asketh receiveth," Matt. vii. 7, 8.

These arguments may suffice if not to carry conviction regarding the truth of what has been advanced, at least to lead all to think soberly on such a profound and mysterious doctrine. It is a doctrine that was held by ancient divines, nor was it called in question until after the introduction of the absolute decree of reprobation, when they separated into two parties. Those who wish further information on the subject should consult Holzfusius, who in a work on predestination has satisfactorily explained and proved this doctrine.

III. Let us now enquire what place this general purpose holds in the order of the divine decrees—whether the first or the third. On this point two different opinions are held—the one by the Supralapsarians and the other by the Sublapsarians.

The Supralapsarians maintain that God in forming his decree first consulted the manifestation of his justice and mercy in saving some and condemning others of the human race, that all his decrees were designed to promote this end and are to be regarded as means to its accomplishment, and that the last of these means was the gift of his Son as Redeemer to some, *i. e.* to the elect, all the others being absolutely destined to destruction and therefore reprobate. But in order that man might be in a condition to illustrate the mercy and justice of God in his salvation or in his final ruin, in other words, in order that his decree to manifest these perfections might thus take effect, they say that God decreed that he should fall, and that by the fall he should become miserable, and that in order to bring this about he decreed to call him into being, so that his creation might prepare the way for his fall, and his creation and fall afford an opportunity for the manifestation of his mercy in saving some and of his justice in condemning others of his posterity.

Such according to them was the order of thought in the mind of God in forming his decree—the first, namely, being the manifestation not of his perfections in general, but of his mercy and justice in particular—the second, the permission of the fall—the third, the creation of man. They thus hold that man was regarded by God in the

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decree of predestination not as created and fallen, but as destined to be created and to be created in order to fall. This is the reason why they are called Supralapsarians. Among the most eminent of them were Beza, Gomarus, Macovius, and Piscator. Calvin, although regarded by many as entertaining their sentiments, was in reality a Sublapsarian.

The Sublapsarian view of the doctrine of predestination is this. God, it is said, proposed as the end of his decree the manifestation of his own glory. He then purposed to create man in order to afford an illustration of his goodness, wisdom, and power, to permit him to fall, and to magnify his mercy and justice in delivering some and in leaving others to perish. They thus assign to predestination the third place—after the creation and the fall, namely, and hold that man was viewed by God in the decree as destined to fall, or as already created and fallen. On this account they are called Sublapsarians or Infralapsarians.

There have been and still are many Supralapsarian divines in our church also. The Synod of Dort likewise pronounced in favour of this system, although for wise reasons they did not give a distinct deliverance on the question. Those who wish to see both systems reviewed may consult the treatise on predestination by Holzfusius. The opinion of men however is of little importance in our view, because we are discussing a point which must be investigated independently of any reference to numbers or to human authority.

There are some also who deem this opinion of little importance, who hold by the simplicity of the divine decree, and say that God understood all things *simul et semel*, and that it is a matter of very little consequence whether a man be a Supralapsarian or Sublapsarian. In this we think they are wrong. To maintain that there is an order of some kind in the decrees of God does not in the slightest degree affect the view we take of the simplicity of his essence, while it is of importance to us to understand what that order is. For although all objects were considered by God by a single act of his mind, they were nevertheless considered according to their real nature —causes as causes, effects as effects, means as means, and ends as ends. The right understanding of this point therefore is not a matter of indifference. We must, on the contrary, come to the conclusion that they were all considered by him in their proper order and connexion, and with a view to the accomplishment of the ends which he proposed. In the mind of God they must all be regarded as agreeable to his perfections and to the nature of things.

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If it be asked then whether man was considered by God in forming his decree as to be created and to fall or as created and fallen, we say we entirely concur in the Sublapsarian opinion—*i. e.* that man was regarded in the latter of these aspects, or in other words that he was already destined to be created and to fall; and our reasons are these.

The Supralapsarian system has no foundation to rest upon. The only thing which its advocates can plead in support of it is the famous maxim, What is last in execution must be first in intention, because it is the end which in any work is contemplated. Now he who is guided by wisdom in forming a purpose always considers the end before he devises means for attaining that end. But all the works of God terminate in the salvation or destruction of men as a manifestation of his justice and mercy. This therefore was the end or the first thing which he contemplated and to which all his other works were to stand in the relation of means.

But we answer this is a very weak foundation on which to rest their system. The axiom from which they reason holds true only in one work of a single series, not in those which are distinct from each other, and which have nothing in common. Now the works of God are of different kinds. His perfections are various and cannot all be manifested by any single work. Each of his works has its respective end, although they are all mutually connected and have the same end. Creation cannot have the same end as predestination and the permission of the fall, and therefore, it cannot be inferred that the works of God have been so arranged as that the antecedent should be the means of the consequent, and the consequent in its turn a step to the last which is the work of predestination, because it is distinct from the others, namely, creation and the permission of the fall, which have a subsistence by themselves and are in themselves complete. The argument therefore drawn from this axiom goes for nothing, and the system which it is employed to uphold must fall to the ground.

In the Supralapsarian system creation is regarded as having for its end the manifestation of the mercy of God in saving some men, and of his justice in leaving others to perish. We say, on the contrary, that it has more appropriate and feasible ends than this. Properly speaking the end of any work is that to which the work directly and immediately tends, and which presents itself to the reflecting mind as flowing spontaneously from the work itself. No one however will say that creation considered in itself tends to manifest

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the mercy and the justice of God, for throughout its vast extent it presents nothing calculated to lead us to such a conclusion. It cannot be regarded, therefore, as a means suited to bring about the end designed in the decree of predestination, the salvation, namely, of some men and the final ruin of others. As there is no adequate proportion then between such an end and such means, and as creation does not present that end to our view, it cannot be said that in calling men into being, he did so for the purpose of consigning some of them to everlasting destruction.

(.) Creation is a benefit which calls for our grateful acknowledgments. But it cannot be so if it tends to effect the end already specified—the destruction of men. It would in such a case be so far from deserving to be regarded as a blessing, that it would rather be a mighty evil in as far as these men are concerned, that God had given them being at all. It cannot therefore be viewed in the light of a benefit, if it be connected with an intention on the part of God to consign some men to destruction.

(..) Such an end is plainly repugnant to the goodness of God. As Creator he is supremely good, and creation is the result of his goodness and tends to manifest it. But how can it be said that he is good, and that creation is a proof of his being so in regard to those whom he has positively created for everlasting destruction?

(∴) The end of creation is not simply the manifestation but the recognition of the divine perfections, in the latter of which consists properly speaking the glory of God. It follows from this (and Scripture teaches the same truth) that the direct design is that men should behold and admire and celebrate these perfections as there exhibited. But men created for the purpose of being devoted to everlasting misery cannot be supposed to be in a condition to do this. Creation, therefore, cannot have for its end that which Supralapsarians assign to it. Their whole system is completely irreconcileable with the justice of God. Nay, it is in direct opposition to that justice which demands that when punishment is exacted, or when any one is destined to destruction, there be a reason founded in equity for adopting such a course. When God, therefore, purposed the destruction of a portion of our race, he must have had a just reason for doing so, for he does not act arbitrarily, but in strict conformity to the dictates of justice, which does not allow any one to be condemned without good and sufficient cause. This cause can only be sin and must have been present to the mind of God when he formed his decree. But this according to the Supralapsarian system was

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not the case, inasmuch as God, it is said, acted from his mere pleasure without a just reason, *i. e.* sin; for he afterwards destined men to fall and to commit sin in order that they might be condemned.

God cannot appoint to condemnation an individual whom he cannot actually condemn. But he cannot in consistency with his own justice actually condemn without a reason; therefore he cannot design any to such an end. The major term of this syllogism is self-evident. God cannot will what he cannot accomplish. To decree is to will, to condemn is to execute. The minor term is also true. For God cannot beforehand condemn man as a creature but as a fallen and guilty creature. But according to the Supralapsarians he would do so without reason, for they say that the fall intervened in order to allow him to bring to pass the end to which he had decreed them. But how inconsistent is it with his justice thus arbitrarily to appoint men to such an end, and for the purpose of carrying it into effect to decree their fall? The order of thought therefore compels us to regard man as having been in the view of God a sinner before he was destined to perish, because God cannot act unjustly and so cannot doom any to punishment unless they be looked upon as chargeable with guilt.

The Supralapsarian system moreover is opposed to the wisdom of God, which requires that there be a right and reasonable relation between the end and the means, between the subject to whom the decree refers and the purpose to which he is destined. On the hypothesis of our opponents man was made to manifest the mercy of God without any regard to his fall and misery. But what relation was there, we ask, between man not in a condition of wretchedness and mercy which unquestionably supposes the existence of misery and is extended to those who have no claims upon its exercise? What relation is there between man not yet viewed as a sinner and justice which cannot be exhibited unless sin have been committed or be presupposed? What relation is there between man destined to salvation and salvation which he is incapable of enjoying—a salvation implying deliverance from evil in which at the same time he was considered as not yet involved? What relation is there, finally, between man doomed to destruction and destruction which he had done nothing to merit, seeing that he was considered in the decree as a creature merely and not as fallen and guilty.

The idea of election necessarily presupposes that of creation. And the reasons are these.

Election is the choosing of some from among a multitude placed

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in precisely the same circumstances and therefore involves the idea of several individuals existing in the same condition.

Election is something accidental, creation is something essential, *i. e.* Creation gives being to man, election has in view his happiness as already in existence. Creation thus gives what is essential, and election what is accidental. But the former always precedes the latter and therefore the idea of creation necessarily precedes that of election and reprobation.

This opinion is countenanced and confirmed by Scripture, which affirms that the object of election is man in a state of apostacy and wretchedness. "I have chosen you," Christ said to his disciples, "out of the world," John xv. 19. God compares himself to a potter who has "power over the clay, of the same lump to make one vessel unto honour and another unto dishonour," Rom. ix. 21. Now if the lump were pure the vessel to be formed of it would be "unto honour," but from the same lump are formed "vessels of wrath" and "vessels of mercy," and therefore we conclude that it was corrupted; in other words, that the human race were regarded in the decree of predestination as fallen, from among whom God in exercise of his own good pleasure chose some to be vessels of mercy and afore prepared them to glory, Rom. ix. 23.

Some have endeavoured to reconcile the Supralapsarian and Sublapsarian system by distinguishing between the restricted and general meaning of predestination, but they have only given a new colouring to the opinion of the Supralapsarians. For some of those who hold that opinion have regarded mercy and justice as the end which God had in view and creation as the means by which he has manifested these perfections.

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CHAPTER XVIII.

PREDESTINATION.

SPECIAL PREDESTINATION—DIFFERENCE BETWEEN GENERAL AND SPECIAL PREDESTINATION—SUBSTANCE AND FORM OF SPECIAL PREDESTINATION—ITS OBJECTS, ENDS, AND MEANS—ITS REASON, ORIGIN, AND IMMUTABILITY—PROOFS FROM SCRIPTURE—OBJECTIONS ANSWERED—PRACTICAL USE OF THE DOCTRINE.

Special Predestination, or the special part of the decree of predestination, to which we shall now direct our attention, we regard as inseparably connected with the general decree. By this Special decree we understand the free, immutable, and eternal determination of the will of God to give to some of those to whom the offer of mercy was to be made that peculiar and efficacious grace which is connected with faith and salvation, and in the exercise of justice to withhold it from others on account of their abuse of his common grace, and because of this abuse, to doom them as unbelievers to destruction.

In the general decree God simply instituted a connection between faith and salvation without any regard to individual persons; whereas in the special decree he marked out those in whom this connexion should eventually be found. But assuredly these two things are not in any way contrary to each other.

In the former God does not design the salvation of all men as such but only of believers. In the latter his design is the same; but he has besides purposed who shall believe and who shall not.

In the former God does not by a positive act of his will design the salvation of any in regard to whom he does not purpose in the latter that they shall really be saved. These two things would oppose and destroy each other. God by his general decree does not positively will that all shall believe; for this would be inconsistent with the special decree in which he has not formed such a purpose. But neither has he positively willed in the general decree that they should not believe, and to this there is nothing contrary in the special decree. In the special decree he has not purposed that believers generally shall be saved, but has fixed that those who abuse his common shall not receive his peculiar and efficacious grace, and shall therefore be condemned, and that some shall be put in possession of that grace

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with which faith and salvation are inseparably connected. Thus the special decree does not oppose the general but only adds something to it.

But the special decree is to be kept in subordination to the general decree and to be put after it.

The latter in the order of nature precedes the former. In the latter God instituted the general connection between faith and eternal life; in the former he fixed upon the persons in whom this connection should be produced, so that the order and nature of things require that the special occupy the relative place which we have assigned to it.

Besides Christ was in the mind of God before the particular persons who were to be united to Christ, and who are said to have been chosen in him, Eph. i. 4. The decree of election, therefore, is posterior to the general purpose or will of God.

The order of our ideas also requires this relative position of the two decrees. For we reason from the general to the special. Whosoever believeth shall be saved—I believe, therefore I shall be saved. The major proposition cannot be formed from the special but from the general decree. In the mind of God, therefore, the latter must take precedence of the former.

In explaining this special decree, *i. e.* the decree of election and reprobation, we must attend

I. To its substance, and
II. To its form.

I. The *substance* of this decree comprehends

(*a.*) Its objects.
(*b.*) Its ends, and
(*c.*) Its means.

(*a.*) The *objects* of the decree are certain men who were all regarded by God as not only created and fallen but also as in a possible state of salvation in respect of God,—all in precisely the same situation and same circumstances. These points we have already considered at sufficient length, and made, we trust, sufficiently clear.

(*b.*) The *ends* of the decree refer both to election and reprobation.

The end of election is faith or union to Christ by faith. It is commonly said to be salvation or eternal life, and this may be considered as its remote end. But it is incorrectly so called, if the proper and immediate end be understood to be referred to. Salvation is the end of faith, and as we have already shewn, the connexion be-

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tween these two depends upon the general decree. We are treating now of the special decree which is subordinate to the general, and the end of which in respect of election can be nothing else than faith or union to Christ by faith on which salvation depends. This is evident from the connection of the special with the general decree as well as from the true and proper meaning of election.

Scripture declares that the end of election is faith and adds that we are chosen in Christ. God hath "chosen the poor of this world rich in faith," James ii. 5; *i. e.* as our interpreters understand the words, "that each of them may be rich in faith." "Whom he did predestinate them he also called, and whom he called, them he also justified," Rom. viii. 30. As therefore the immediate end of calling is justification, so calling consequently on which faith depends is the immediate end of predestination. Faith therefore is the end of predestination. Scripture moreover teaches us that we are chosen in order that we may be "without blame before him" and in consequence of our union by faith to Christ live in the practice of holiness, Eph. i. 4.

Scripture says also that we are chosen in Christ, thereby indirectly intimating that faith is the end of election—not as if we were considered in the decree as already united to Christ, but because in our election we are given to Christ and destined to be united to him. For Christ is here viewed as the appointed Saviour of all believers and that too before the special decree was made. On this account we are said to be chosen in him, *i. e.* we were in election set apart for him and given to him. This is confirmed by the representation we have of the covenant entered into between the Father and the Son. In this covenant the Father gave certain persons to the Son to be redeemed by him, and we are considered in it as the flock of Christ to whom he gives eternal life, John x. 27, 28. As election, therefore, is of the Father, it must have for its end our union to Christ by faith.

The very idea of election rightly considered teaches us the same truth. For it is a choice of some from among many. Now the question is in what does this choice consist? Unquestionably in faith in Christ and in our thus being united to him. But why then is election eternal? The choice was made from eternity in the mind of God. But as election is made in time by faith, it must also have been such in the eternal purpose of God. It cannot be in eternity different from what it is in time. But in time it is by faith in Christ, it must also be by faith in the eternal purpose of God. There-

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fore we conclude that the immediate end of election is faith in Christ. To this it has been objected,

(*a.*) Scripture says "God hath not appointed us to wrath but to obtain salvation by our Lord Jesus Christ," 1 Thess. v. 9. But the word appointed is understood not of the special but of the general decree, he hath appointed those who believe not to wrath but to obtain salvation—so that nothing can be concluded from this passage adverse to the view which we have given.

(*β.*) We read that "as many as were ordained to eternal life believed," Acts. xiii. 48. We reply that eternal life is spoken of here not as the immediate but as the remote end. We do not deny that it is the end of election, but we say that it is not the immediate end. The immediate end is faith—the remote end is eternal life; and seeing that there is a connection between the two, the latter is presented to our view not the former. This passage confirms our opinion, for when it is said that they believed, it is plain that faith is the immediate effect of their being ordained and accordingly the immediate end of their election.

But it may be questioned whether there is any reference in this passage to predestination. The apostle does not say "as many as were predestinated" but "as many as were ordained." The interpretation would be somewhat absurd, if predestination be understood, namely that, because no one could be said to have believed in Christ at that time except those who then actually believed, no others were predestinated to eternal life,—a fact which was not known to the apostle. Paul therefore must have known that none but those who believed at that time were elected, ordained to eternal life. But this none will admit; for the secret and eternal purpose of God is hid from all.

The apostle probably meant nothing more than that those believed who were ordained to life, or that they were actuated by the desire to be put in possession of this blessing and were led to aspire after it.

This interpretation may be illustrated by what is said in the 46th verse where the Jews are spoken of as putting the word of God from them and judging themselves unworthy of eternal life, and thus shewed that their state of mind was far different from that of many of the Gentiles to whom the same word was addressed. This disposition however was not of their own creating, it was produced in them by God. It was not the result of any efforts of their own but was wrought in them by the particular and efficacious grace of God. And thus the meaning is that those believed who had this disposition

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bestowed upon them whose hearts as in the case of Lydia God had opened to believe, in whom he had awakened a desire to be put in possession of eternal life. There seems nothing in this passage at all at variance with the proposition we have laid down, that faith is the immediate and direct end of election.

(*c.*) The proper means of election is particular, efficacious, irresistible grace,—grace, therefore, intimately connected with faith and not bestowed upon all—by which the heart is opened and fitted for the reception of faith. But of this grace we will speak more at length when we come to regeneration and effectual calling.

The other part of the special decree is *reprobation*. This is not the absolute will of God concerning the condemnation of some men without regard to anything else than his mere good pleasure. For there is no such absolute decree; nor can it consist with the general decree of which we have already spoken. It is opposed also to the universal love of God towards men and cannot possibly be reconciled with the general proposition *he that believeth shall be saved*, a proposition however which must be regarded as true if we would not call in question the sincerity and faithfulness of God. The arguments drawn from it will tell powerfully against absolute reprobation, nor is it necessary to adduce more for the purpose of refuting it.

This decree is supposed by some to be referred to by Paul when he says quoting from the Old Testament, "Jacob have I loved, but Esau have I hated," Rom. ix. 13. But the word "hated" does not mean an absolute decree of reprobation, but only that God *loved the one less than the other* and did not design for him particular grace or as it called in the 18th verse *hardened* him. To *hate* and to *love less* are exchangeable terms. "If any man," Christ says, "come to me and hate not his father. &c. he cannot be my disciple," Luke xiv. 16. "He that loveth father or mother more than me is not worthy of me," Matt. x. 37. In such instances as these hatred cannot be understood in any other sense than that which we have assigned to it, *i.e. loving less*. For the hating of our parents in the ordinary acceptation of the term is forbidden, and yet here our Lord enjoins it upon us. Nor is the circumstance of the apostle's using the figure of a potter in the 21st verse to be considered as a proof of the existence of this absolute decree. For he is not speaking of what God actually does but of what he has a sovereign right and power to do with man. This deserves especial notice. The apostle refers to what God says in the Old Testament, "O house of Israel, cannot I do with you as the potter," Jer. xviii. 6. He may

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do so, yet he does not like the potter act arbitrarily but in harmony with his justice, goodness, and truth. The apostle does not say in the 22d verse that God formed the "vessels of wrath," but only, and that distinctly, that they were "fitted to destruction" and that he "endured" them "with much long-suffering, to make his power known." They were fitted for destruction not absolutely but by their own corruption. When God made a "vessel unto dishonour" the lump from which it was taken was impure. There is therefore no absolute decree of reprobation, and if divines could prevail upon themselves to reject it they would avoid many stumbling blocks and difficulties connected with this doctrine.

What then is reprobation? In our opinion it is the withholding on the part of God from some men of his particular grace on which faith depends. The consequence of this withholding is unbelief. And thus they who are reprobate are destined to unbelief as the immediate end of reprobation by the denial of this particular grace. The remote end is their condemnation because of their unbelief.

If it be asked why God ordained them to destruction as reprobation is usually understood, we answer because he foresaw that they would not believe. If it be asked on what foundation this foreknowledge rests, we say on God's denying them particular grace. If moreover it be asked why he denied them this grace, we reply because it was his good pleasure so to do. If finally the question be put whether his pleasure was arbitrary, we say that was not but that he acted agreeably to his wisdom and justice, that he had reasons of his own although they be unknown by us for withholding from them his efficacious grace. He never acts without the wisest reasons; for his wisdom is infinite, and as to the justice of his good pleasure we may say that it consisted in his denying special grace to those who abused his common grace and in his condemning them for that abuse.

II. In considering the *form* of this special decree three things demand our attention.

(1.) The reason which led God to make it.
(2.) When it was formed.
(3.) Its immutability.

(1.) In regard to the reason or cause which moved God to make this decree it is asked whether it is to be found in God's foresight of what men would be or in his wise good pleasure.

On this point we differ principally with the Remonstrants, who say that God decreed to men in time an equal measure of grace, as much

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namely as should be sufficient for salvation, but that the use or abuse of this grace was left to men themselves without the communication of any higher grace—that the consequence of this would be that some would believe and that others would not—that God foresaw from eternity who would improve and who would abuse his grace, that on this foresight he chose the one and rejected or decreed to destruction the other, and that the reason which led him to do so was their faith and unbelief which from eternity he foresaw. According to them therefore the moving cause of the decree is something in men themselves.

As may be seen from what we have already said, the reason which we assign is widely different from that now mentioned. We hold that in addition to common there is also particular and efficacious grace, and we say that God chose some men to eternal life, not because they would believe by the grace given to them in common with others, but because in the exercise of his good pleasure he would impart to them special grace,—that he ordained the rest to destruction, because, that grace being denied them, they would not believe but that this denial originated in his own wise and righteous pleasure, and because those who abused the common grace which they enjoyed rendered themselves unworthy of receiving special grace. The reason of the special decree is thus in our view to be sought in the good pleasure of God, without any reference to the character of the individuals. Not, however, as if he acted arbitrarily in the matter, for he never does so in any case. He was guided in his determination by a regard to his wisdom and justice.

Our arguments in favour of this view of the subject are drawn partly from the propositions we have already laid down, and partly from Scripture.

The first proposition relates to the foreknowledge of God, which presupposes the future existence of all those things which it comprehends. If an event be uncertain, so also must the foreknowledge of that event. If the right or wrong use of common grace be dependent solely upon man's will, it cannot be certainly foreknown by God.

The second proposition refers to particular and irresistible grace, which we hold is given to all who believe, as we shall afterwards shew. If this be admitted the opinion of the Remonstrants evidently must fall to the ground. For if God has decreed grace of this kind, and if faith depends upon this grace, then unquestionably election cannot be said to rest upon God's foresight of faith and upon man's free-will, but upon the proper improvement of common grace.

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Our third proposition is that faith is the immediate end of election. If so it cannot be the foundation on which election rests, as the Remonstrants maintain. So far was God from choosing man on account of foreseen faith, *i. e.*, as one who would believe in the exercise of his own free will, and by the common grace bestowed upon him, that he rather appointed him in election particular grace having faith as its immediate end. There is thus obviously a wide difference between our opinion and that of the Remonstrants, because we affirm that faith is the immediate and direct end of election, which faith according to them is the foundation and moving cause of election. We conclude, therefore, that the reason which led God to choose some and to reject others was not the faith of the former and unbelief of the latter foreseen by him, but his own good pleasure in the exercise of which he purposed to dispense unequally his efficacious grace, by giving it to some and denying it to others, yet with a due regard to the dictates of his justice and infinite wisdom.

But we have arguments also drawn directly from the word of God in confirmation of our opinion.

1. Scripture expressly refers to the good pleasure of God as the reason by which we must abide. It nowhere says that this reason is in the faith or unbelief of men, or in the grace which is given equally to all, but which is improved by some and abused by others. It distinctly says that God hath chosen us in Christ, "according to the good pleasure of his will," Eph. i. 4, 5. "I thank thee, O Father," Christ said, "because thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes. Even so, Father, for so it seemed good in thy sight," Matt. xi. 25, 26. We are not to understand our Lord as giving thanks to his Father, because these things were hid; for this was not matter for gratitude, but because, while he had been pleased to conceal them from the wise, he had revealed them to babes. Such revelation was cause for thanksgiving, for both it and the concealing of which he speaks refer to saving truth, and terminate in faith and unbelief, in eternal life and final ruin, and both of them he ascribes to the pleasure of his Father. It is true indeed that the wise were not disposed to receive the gospel, and that infants as being more exempt from prejudices were in a fitter condition than they for doing so; but Christ does not assign this diversity of disposition as the reason which induced God to hide in the one case or to reveal in the other. He resolves all into the pleasure of God. For God was able to remove the indisposition of the

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wise, if he had seen it meet to do so. Therefore we must hold by the reason which God himself gives, even his own wise and righteous will.

2. We derive another argument from the chain of blessings which the apostle links together. "Whom he did predestinate, them he also called; and whom he called, them he also justified," &c., Rom. viii. 30. As justification is the end of calling, so it follows that calling is the end of predestination and springs from it. And as calling which precedes and serves to produce faith flows from predestination, then certainly the foundation and cause of predestination cannot be that faith as foreseen by God, for he calls those whom he has predestinated. Those, therefore, who are called are called because they have been predestinated; but they were not predestinated because they were to be called and to believe.

3. We read again, "For the children, Esau and Jacob, namely, being not yet born, neither having done any good or evil, that the purpose of God according to election might stand, not of works but of him that calleth. It was said unto her, The elder shall serve the younger," Rom. ix. 11, 12. The apostle illustrates this at greater length in what follows, vindicates it from the objections that might be brought against it, and shews that God in making a distinction between some men and others had no respect to their good or bad qualities, but solely to his own pleasure; that he declared that he preferred Jacob to Esau, because such was his purpose according to election, "not of works, but of him that calleth." Our opponents say that the apostle does not treat of this, but simply of the fact of God's choosing the condition of salvation according to his own pleasure, of his electing those who he foresaw would in time implement that condition, and of his rejecting the rest because of their foreseen unbelief or abuse of grace. The apostle would thus prove against the Jews that God had chosen certain men, whether from among themselves or from among the Gentiles, because they were to believe, and thus in the exercise of his good pleasure instituted the condition of salvation.

This opinion however labours under several difficulties. For it represents the apostle as disputing about a matter in regard to which no one entertains any doubt, and this is quite inconsistent with the wisdom which he always manifested. He is not proving that God has appointed faith as the condition of salvation—he does not utter a single word here on this point. He is speaking of the right and power of God to do so, for some one he supposed called this in question, and there-

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fore he reasoned regarding this right on the part of God. This is evident from verses 20, 21.

The apostle considers men in reference to the decree of election and reprobation as equal. This is evident from the 11th verse. But according to our opponents God considered them as not placed in the same circumstances, but some in his foreknowledge as believers and others as unbelievers. Here however it is distinctly stated that they were on the same footing, that there was nothing in either why the one should be preferred before the other.

Conclusions are usually formed from controversies and disputed points. And these conclusions should be regarded as determining what the matter in dispute has been, for they ordinarily repeat the subject discussed and proved in what has gone before. Let us now see whether the conclusions which the apostle draws are agreeable to what according to our opponents he had been arguing in the preceding part of the chapter. He says in the 16th verse, "So then it is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that sheweth mercy;" and again in the 18th verse, "Therefore hath he mercy on whom he will have mercy, and whom he will he hardeneth." But if our opponents be right, his inferences should have been, *it is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of him that believeth, and therefore hath he mercy on them that believe, and them that believe not he hardeneth.* But he concludes only in regard to the will and pleasure of God, a clear proof that he treats of the same will and pleasure in regard to what he had been previously speaking of, and that he considered it as the reason why God has mercy on some and hardens others.

We may also come to a right understanding of what is really the point in dispute by considering the objections urged and the replies given to these objections. Both should indicate clearly the state of the controversy. Now the apostle supposes objections to be made and answers them. "What shall we say then? Is there unrighteousness with God," ver. 14. But what force would there have been in such an objection if he had been speaking merely of the right which God has to choose and to reject? In this there was not even the appearance of injustice. But if he were treating of the fact that God had chosen some and rejected others by an unequal distribution of his grace among those who were all in the same circumstances, there might be in this case something like injustice. To meet this objection, therefore, he says, that there is no unrighteousness in such

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procedure on the part of God, and quotes the words formerly addressed by God to Moses, "I will have mercy on whom I will have mercy" (ver. 15), that is, as if he had said, This belongs to the "face" of God which is unknown, and cannot be seen by you, and therefore God assigns no reason for his doing so. His pleasure must be acquiesced in as wise and just. And why? He does not say, because they believe not, and are therefore reprobate, or because they believe and are therefore elect.

Again he supposes another objection, "Why doth he yet find fault? for who hath resisted his will?" (ver. 19.) Where would be the force of this objection if the apostle had been arguing in the way our opponents affirm? How could he appeal to the right and to the absolute power of God, when according to them the cause of election and reprobation was in men themselves? How could he reply by adducing the instance of the potter who has power over the clay, when he might have referred to the unbelief of those who resisted his will, and said, *Why doth he yet find fault when man does not believe?*

(2.) In regard to the period when this decree was formed, we say that it was *in eternity*. Socinians and a few of the Remonstrants deny this. The former will not admit the foreknowledge of all events on the part of God, and therefore will not admit that the decree of election and reprobation was made from eternity upon a foreknowledge of the faith of some and of the unbelief of others. They say that God has determined nothing from eternity regarding the condition of men, but that he has left this to men themselves—that he elects in time when a man begins to believe, and at length completely chooses, when a man has become a perfect believer.

They thus directly deny the eternity of predestination. In refutation of their opinion we refer to the following propositions, some of which we have already established.

(*a.*) A decree is a simple act of the divine mind done from eternity *simul et semel*, and none of his decrees are made in time.

(*b.*) God foreknew all things. This certainly cannot be admitted if the eternity of predestination be denied, for then the condition of men would be uncertain in respect of God, if he did not foreknow it. But we have already proved that he did.

(*c.*) Faith is from God and is the result of his efficacious grace. The decree cannot come after faith but must precede it, as on that decree depends the grace by which faith is produced.

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But besides these we have direct arguments for the eternity of the decree of predestination.

Scripture makes use of the word which, as we have already seen, obviously intimates that the decree was formed in eternity, before the foundation of the world was laid.

Scripture speaks of predestination as preceding calling, nay, as that from which calling springs. "Whom he did predestinate, them he also called," Rom. viii. 30.

Our opponents however say that by *calling* the apostle means calling to afflictions. But this we hold to be entirely contrary to reason. The word as here used has no reference to afflictions, nor does such an interpretation suit the purpose which the apostle has in view. He connects calling with predestination and justification: "Whom he called, them he also justified." But all who are called to afflictions are not always justified and glorified. His object is to comfort believers under the fear which they may sometimes have that they shall apostatize from God. But who will say that he imparted comfort by such a statement? What consolation would it have been to tell them that they were called to endure trouble?

The apostle mentions election and reprobation as preceding the birth of men, Rom. ix. 11, &c. Although in this passage he quotes from the Old Testament, "The elder shall serve the younger;" "Jacob have I loved, but Esau have I hated"—language which originally applies to the descendants of Esau and Jacob, and to the temporal blessings and evils of both respectively, and means that those who should spring from the former would be the servants of the Israelites, the posterity of Jacob,—yet this language had a further meaning and was verified in the persons themselves. It was thus applied certainly by the apostle to them before they had done good or evil, and this is sufficient to shew us that such was the meaning which he attached to the words, and that in using them he referred to the spiritual and eternal condition of both Esau and Jacob. That they are to be so understood is evident from the fact that Esau was a profane person who despised and sold his birthright, Heb. xii. 16. It is plain that Paul had in view a distinction between the persons, and therefore it is enough for us to say here that God made this distinction between Esau and Jacob, before they knew good and evil.

Scripture states that the decree of predestination was made before the foundation of the world. "According as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world," Eph. i. 4. "And all that dwell upon the earth shall worship him, whose names are not

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written in the book of life of the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world," Rev. xiii. 8. The words "before the foundation of the world" in the latter of these passages are not connected with those which go immediately before, namely, "the Lamb slain," but with this writing in the book; for it is an unsuitable and unusual expression to call Christ a Lamb slain from the foundation of the world. But there is a parallel passage which removes all difficulty. "They that dwell on the earth shall wonder (whose names were not written in the book of life from the foundation of the world) when they behold the beast," &c., Rev. xvii. 8. The same words are here expressly connected with the writing in the book of life. Now as the names are said to be written there, they certainly lead us to conclude that these particular persons were chosen by God. The expression is not to be understood, as our opponents would have it to be, of conditions, for it is never so used. Names are marks of personality and require that there be persons who have been chosen in the purpose of God. This is the meaning of the phrase. It is taken from the practice of men who enrol the names of citizens and of heirs, or from the practice of kings who registered the names of their subjects in a census. It is evident therefore that the decree of election is eternal.

(3.) We have only a few words to say in reference to the *immutability* of the decree, because, as we have seen when treating of the general decree, the matter is not called in question. For when our opponents say that the decree of predestination is changed, they understand the conditional part of it, and this certainly is said to be changed when men do not fulfil the condition. But there is really no change in the decree itself. Its fulfilment was suspended upon the condition, and, when the condition is not implemented, the decree is not altered but only the execution of the decree, which is fixed by the observance or neglect of the conditions prescribed.

We maintain that the decree is absolute and therefore immutable. This may be said particularly of the special decree. "The gifts and the calling of God *are* without repentance," Rom. xi. 29. The elect are represented as having their names written in the book of life and this writing certainly remains. But as we have said this necessarily follows if the decree be absolute which it really is.

Having thus finished the didactic exposition of this doctrine, we now proceed to remove the difficulties which attend it, to vindicate it from the objections which have been brought against it, and to refute the principal arguments that have been employed to uphold the system of our opponents.

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It has been objected to the decree of predestination that it reflects dishonour on God, both because it makes him the author of sin and of all evil, and because it represents him as dealing arbitrarily with his creatures without any regard to his moral perfections and especially his goodness. To the former of these objections we reply, In addition to the fact that the decree is not the efficient cause of future events, inasmuch as they depend upon the extrinsic or transitive act of God (so that this objection applies equally as we shall see to our doctrine regarding the providence and co-operation (*concursus*) of God)—in addition to this fact, we say, it may be sufficient to observe that the divine decree is suited to the nature of things and does not imply that God by his command effects all things in time but simply that he determines what shall happen. They all have their particular efficient causes—which he does not remove or dispense with, but which he suffers to act and which he makes fit to produce their several effects.

The decree therefore is not the efficient cause of all things nor does God by the decree become the author of sin: because he has simply purposed that sin shall be. And thus in time sin was introduced by man's abusing the liberty bestowed upon him. In his decree God has accommodated himself to the nature of things: some he has purposed to effect, others he has purposed to permit. Thus he is not the author of sin, because he had to do simply with its futurition which should be brought about by its own causes which he does not remove but which he allows to act according as he has purposed in his decree.

Besides, the decree cannot be regarded as the cause of sin, because man is its immediate and direct author. He does not sin because God has decreed that he will act in a certain way; for the decree being unknown is not to him a rule of conduct. But he acts freely when he sins—God permitting and directing what from all eternity he purposed should happen.

In reply to the latter objection that God namely acts arbitrarily in decreeing and has no regard to his justice, goodness, and mercy, we reply that, according to the doctrine which we hold, he acts not arbitrarily but from his good pleasure, so that his will is his reason. We maintain that he has reasons for decreeing what he has decreed, for dispensing unequally his special grace; and thus according to the real opinion of our Church predestination is not arbitrary on the part of God, but flows from his wise and righteous will. We do not therefore exclude reasons but admit rather that there were sufficient rea-

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sons which determined God in decreeing in the way he has done and not otherwise. These reasons we do not know and therefore we rest satisfied in his good pleasure. Scripture determines nothing in regard to the reasons of the divine decree, it resolves all into his sovereign will which is among the secret things that belong only to himself.

In regard to those moral perfections of God to which, according to our opponents, this doctrine is opposed, we have already seen that the unequal dispensation of that special grace which is essential to the existence of faith is not contrary to his goodness and justice. On this subject however we shall have more to say under effectual calling and regeneration.

It is objected further that this doctrine infringes our liberty and altogether destroys it. Of this liberty however we cannot be deprived. Conscience tells us that we act freely. It is supposed to be contrary to our freedom, because all things have been fixed by the decree and are therefore certainly future, and that we cannot act or not as we will, but must act necessarily in the way which has been arranged and settled in the decree. To this we answer that our liberty is determined in the decree of God. He has not decreed to produce liberty in us by an act of his almighty power, but he has fixed that we shall act in the exercise of liberty and in the use of reason. But more of this when we come to treat of the providence of God. The decree moreover has only fixed the certainty of an event, the futurition of an object. And thus no infringement is made upon our liberty, unless it be maintained that liberty cannot consist with the certainty of an event, which is the case according to our opponents who suppose that our liberty is altogether indifferent. But we deny that our liberty is of this description. We say that it is dependent, that we act from reasons whether known or unknown which affect the will. That the certainty of an event in no way interferes with our freedom is clear from this, that if it do then we must deny the foreknowledge of God which takes this certainty for granted. As we have proved, however, that foreknowledge is one of the divine perfections and as our opponents admit it to be so, they certainly cannot reason from this liberty of man, because the decree determines nothing more than that a thing will certainly happen by means which do not affect our liberty but which leave it entire.

Another objection against this doctrine is that it takes away all motives to make use of the means of salvation, because an individual may reason with himself thus,—if I am elected, God will in his own

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time effectually call and regenerate me ; if I am reprobate, all that I do is vain, all the means ordinarily employed to attain salvation will be utterly unavailing.

We admit that men may reason in this way from our doctrine regarding the decree of reprobation, but we deny that they must necessarily thus reason. They may argue in a different way and with greater safety. Allowing this doctrine to stand, a man may thus reason with himself,—I am uncertain what God has purposed in regard to me ; but I know this, that no one will be saved unless he believe and lead a holy life, and therefore it is safer for me to employ every means for the attainment of salvation and to leave my future condition to God.

We hold that men should not thus reason from our doctrine regarding the general decree of predestination, because God has instituted a general connection between faith and salvation without rejecting any or dooming them to destruction. All may thus be certain that "he that believeth shall be saved," and that, if they believe, they also will be saved. There is no ground to fear that this proposition will not hold true in regard to them, and therefore no one may say,—It is a matter of no consequence whether I believe or not,—for God does not expressly exclude any ; his language is "he that believeth shall be saved." An earnest desire and effort after salvation therefore cannot be to no purpose, for we do not hold that there is such a decree as that of absolute reprobation. But we maintain that God has ordained a general connection between faith and salvation.

Finally a man cannot by our doctrine be forbidden the use of means, because God who wills the end wills also the means, and because those whom he wills to save he also wills to save by means.

Once more it is objected that our doctrine is inimical to godliness and virtue and leads to carnal security. This objection we shall consider when we come to the practical use of the doctrine.

Let us now look at the system of our opponents and at the arguments on which it is made to rest.

They all agree in this that decrees are either absolute or conditional, but they admit that there are only three of the former, those namely which relate to the creation of the world, to the mission of Christ, and to the salvation of believers; the rest which refer to men individually they call conditional. In these God decreed not what man should actually do but what he ought to do if he would be saved and not perish.

But they differ among themselves in regard to the eternity of the decree.

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Some admit that it is eternal, as the Pelagians, the Jesuits, and with a few exceptions the Remonstrants. They hold that the decree was the result of the foreknowledge of God in regard to man's fulfilling or neglecting the condition of salvation, that God communicates equal grace to all but leaves the use or abuse of it to men themselves, that he foresaw who would improve and who would misimprove it, and that upon this foresight he predestinated the former to salvation and the latter to destruction.

Others, however, of the Remonstrants and the Socinians deny the eternity of the decrees and say that God foresaw or predestinated nothing, but only waited to see what men would perform or neglect, and that then in time he formed his decrees. They scarcely deserve to be attended to, however, and we have already refuted them when treating of the foreknowledge of God.

The former of these who hold that the decree is the result of God's foresight of the faith of some and of the unbelief of others argue in favour of their opinion from the conditional statements of Scripture, from the universal love of God, and from some passages of his word.

In regard to the argument drawn from conditional declarations, such as "Whosoever believeth shall be saved" and the like, our system concerning the general decree furnishes an easy reply. We hold that these conditional declarations do indeed belong to the decree, but that they are declarations not of the whole of it but only of a part—because besides the general decree in which God has instituted a connection between faith and salvation, there is also a special decree regarding the unequal dispensation of peculiar efficacious grace. Nor is there any opposition between these two, the one being the divine purpose regarding the way of salvation and the other the selection or choice of those who by that way shall be put in possession of eternal life. From these general or conditional declarations it cannot be inferred that there is not a special decree of election and reprobation.

To the argument drawn from the universal love of God in favour of the equal distribution of the same grace to all, we reply, we admit that that love exists, but we do not admit that in the exercise of it God has given equally to all the same means of salvation. This is contradicted by experience. In this respect, as we have already seen, there is an important distinction to be observed. We have also seen that the unequal distribution of special grace is not opposed to the goodness of God. This will appear more evident in a subsequent part of our work.

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They appeal, moreover, to some passages from Scripture in which, according to them, the foreknowledge of God is spoken of as the foundation of his decree.

I. "Whom he did foreknow, them he did predestinate," Rom. viii. 29. But we ask what are we to understand by foreknowledge here? Is it theoretical or practical? For let it be borne in mind there is a twofold foresight and foreknowledge which are often confounded with the love of God, so that it may be said whom he loved them he did predestinate. Predestination is the result of his love. "Jacob have I loved, but Esau have I hated," Rom. ix. 13. The Apostle Paul in like manner traces it to the same source. He says that he hath chosen us in Christ "in love," (ἐν ἀγάπῃ), Eph. i. 4,—an expression which stands in close connection with the first clause of the next verse. Scripture uniformly ascribes predestination to the love of God. "The Lord did not choose you," Moses said to the Jews, "because ye were more in number than any people. . . . But because the Lord loved you," Deut. vii. 7, 8. It may properly be said, therefore, that whom he foreknew and whom he loved them he did predestinate. But it cannot be concluded from the word as employed here that his foreknowledge is the cause and foundation of election.

2. "God hath chosen us in him," *i. e.* Christ, "before the foundation of the world," Eph. i. 4, *i. e.* as our opponents explain the passage, as being in Christ, united to him by faith. And as the decree is eternal, God must have foreseen this union and therefore also the faith by which it is effected. But to be chosen in Christ is not the same as to be chosen as being in Christ. Nor is it said in this passage that we are so in the latter sense, but that in election we are given to Christ. Hence it may be inferred that Christ was appointed in the decree as the mediator and redeemer of believers, before individuals were given to be saved by him. Election therefore is the purpose of God to give these individuals to be united to him by faith, and to be delivered from wrath, not however as if in this purpose God considered them to be already in Christ.

3. "Hath not God chosen the poor of this world rich in faith?" James ii. 5. From this passage they conclude that these persons were rich in faith when they were chosen, and that they were foreseen by God as such when from eternity he elected them. But the apostle is speaking here not of faith as already in existence but of faith as the end of election. He does not mean to say that the poor were chosen because they were rich in faith, but that they were chosen in order that they might be so; or as it is added not because they were

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already but that they might be "heirs of the kingdom which he hath promised to them that love him."

These are the leading arguments on which the system of our opponents rests.

It now remains that we consider this doctrine in a *practical* point of view. This is all the more necessary because it is represented as hostile to the interests of godliness. In order that it may serve and promote these interests it requires to be handled with prudence and skill. With this view a distinction must be made between those to whom the application of it is made. For we must acknowledge that it is of no advantage to men before they believe—no motives to believe can be drawn from it—nay, it is liable to be most grievously abused.

In the case of believers it is well fitted to fill them with comfort and joy. So far from diverting them from the pursuit of holiness, it presents them with the strongest motives to study conformity to the image of God. If any one therefore would derive benefit from this doctrine, he must be among the number of those who believe, for by others it is liable to be abused, and in their hearing it must be cautiously handled. But it is a sufficient vindication of this profound mystery if it serve to impart consolation to the people of God.

And it is fraught with comfort to them, when they consider that the decree of election is a proof of that peculiar love which God from eternity entertained towards them. It is as it were the source and foundation of their salvation, because God conducts to eternal life all whom he has chosen, and it is as it were the author of their salvation possessed and enjoyed by them in every season of conflict and sorrow; for as "the gifts and the calling of God are without repentance," they may rest assured that he who from eternity so loved them will see to it that all things work together for their good, Rom. viii. 28. It opens up also a source of joy and boasting in God when they regard him as a kind and merciful father who from eternity appointed them to everlasting life.

It serves in no small degree to foster the piety of believers whom God has chosen to salvation and who have some sense of the love which he has manifested in their election. For they cannot but regard with feelings of holy affection him who has formed such purposes in regard to them—they cannot but look upon themselves as bound to gratitude and obedience in return for such blessings as he has conferred upon them. They know that he has linked together

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by an indissoluble bond the end and the means, and therefore they cannot thus reason with themselves,— God has chosen us, therefore we may live as we please. They know that in his unalterable decree there is a connection between the means and the end, and that his blessings must be thankfully received and suitably improved. The love of God, moreover, manifested in this decree, should awaken in them a feeling of deep humility, and lead them to ascribe their salvation solely to God who has chosen them, to the exclusion of all merits, of all foreseen moral excellences of their own. Thus the doctrine invigorates the devotion of believers. In its absence or in a state of uncertainty in regard to its truth we would continually struggle between hope and fear, our salvation would be involved in doubt. But in the possession of this doctrine and of the evidence for its truth which Scripture affords, we are assured that the people of God are chosen to eternal life.

Although such be the benefits with which the consideration of this doctrine is attended in the case of those who believe, yet to sinners and the unregenerate it not only is of no service, inasmuch as it cannot furnish motives to conversion, but it is also liable to be abused, as having a tendency to beget in them prejudices against God, and to confirm them in sin and carnal security.

The misunderstanding of this doctrine is fitted to awaken in them prejudice against God, and to lead them to conclude that he is a respecter of persons, that he hates those whom he has left to perish, that he is the author of all evil inasmuch as all human actions are subject to his decree, and that at the same time he deals unequally with those who were all originally in exactly the same situation.

It has a tendency also to confirm them in carnal security. They suppose that they are exempt from all blame — that the fault lies with God and with his decree—that all means are unavailing, seeing that those whom God has chosen will also in his own time be brought to salvation, and that those who have not been chosen need make no effort or contend with means—that an individual, in short, may be saved though he be less earnest in his endeavours after holiness, provided he is elected, because the elect cannot fall from the grace of God, and because all things shall work together for their good.

Experience proves that the doctrine is liable to be abused in this way. We say abused, because these effects result not from the doctrine itself, but either from the misunderstanding of it, or from the fact that those who consider it are enemies to God and godliness.

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Like the gospel itself it is to such the "savour of death unto death," 2 Cor. ii. 16. Hence it is plain that this doctrine, as we have already hinted, should be cautiously and prudently handled, so as not to furnish them with even the shadow of a pretext for continuing in sin.*

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* After the lengthy and ingenious discussion by the author on the subject of predestination, we confess we feel ourselves just where we were. In attempting to reconcile the doctrine of election with the universality of the Gospel offer and with the expressed unwillingness of God that men should perish; he has only shifted the difficulty he has not removed it. The fact is they are hopelessly irreconcileable in our present state, and those who have made the attempt had much better have let it alone. It is a truth revealed in Scripture that all who are or who shall be saved are and shall be so in consequence of the eternal purpose of God, in other words, that all believers are elected persons, chosen in Christ before the world began, and that none will believe in Christ and be made partakers of his salvation except those who are the subjects of this divine purpose or decree. It is also revealed in Scripture that there is a divine purpose in regard to those who are not elected or chosen. It is impossible, we think, to admit the one without admitting the other. Election is an act of mind on the part of God in regard to some—reprobation or preterition or whatever other name may be employed is also an act of mind on the part of God in regard to others—he refused to choose them. Do we read for instance that the names of some were written in the book of life? we read also that the names of others were not so written. Do we find some spoken of as vessels of mercy prepared afore unto glory? we find others spoken of as vessels of wrath fitted for destruction. Is it said that some were chosen in Christ before the world began? it is also said that others were of old ordained to condemnation who stumble at the word being disobedient whereunto also they were appointed. Now we must take God's word as we find it and receive its statements as true with whatever difficulties the reception of them may be attended. We may not be able to see how the existence of these decrees can consist with human liberty and responsibility or with the justice and goodness of God. But the fact is we have nothing whatever to do with the reconciling of these apparently contrary things. That is God's province not ours. If we find both clearly revealed, we are bound to receive both. Our reason must be silent before this and every other mystery contained in his word. It must be treated just as Zacharias was treated by the angel. When the priest to whom he communicated the glad news of the birth of a son, asked "Whereby shall I know this?" the angel stops his mouth, "Behold," says he, "thou shalt be dumb." Just as Hagar, while obedient to Sarah, was entertained as a servant, but when she usurped and contradicted and would not submit was expelled from the household of Abraham, so reason as long as it is subject to revelation is to be kindly entertained as a useful handmaid, but the moment it begins to oppose faith is to be abandoned and cast out as giving law to one who is invested with an authority to which it should meekly and willingly submit. The duty devolving upon those who preach and hear the Gospel in regard to this difficulty is plain. The doctrines of election and reprobation are to be believed because God has revealed them. But in delivering the message of mercy the preacher has nothing whatever to do with them—he must proclaim that message as if there were no such things in existence, and no more allow them to interfere with his presenting to all the offer of a free and full salvation in Christ than the physician would in discharging the duties of his profession. There is predestination in the latter case as well as in the former—a predestination that embraces both the end and the means. Some are appointed to die, others to recover. But he deals with all, as if his skill in every case were to be followed with success. The same holds true in regard to those who hear the Gospel. The fact that God has chosen some to eternal life and passed by the rest should not be allowed to interfere with the duty that devolves upon them to seek to be saved, any more than the fact of God's decrees extending to all the ordinary occupations of life should interfere in any de-

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CHAPTER XIX.

CREATION.

CREATION DEFINED — ITS ESSENTIAL CAUSE, GOD— PROVED FROM SCRIPTURE AND REASON—ITS ECONOMICAL CAUSE, THE TRINITY—ITS EFFECT —ITS MANNER INTERIOR AND EXTERIOR—MOSAIC ACCOUNT—THE ENDS OF CREATION IN REFERENCE TO GOD, PRIMARY AND SECONDARY—ITS ENDS IN REFERENCE TO THE CREATURES.

Creation is an extrinsic work of God by which he called into being the universe in the space of six days by his will and omnipotent command, and for the manifestation of his own glory.

In treating this subject we take for granted

First, That the universe, the material system, in respect both of its substance and form, is not self-existent and eternal, but that it was produced and had a beginning to its being.

Secondly, That it was produced by a Being endued with wisdom and reason, and that it is not, as Epicureans dreamed, a disorderly mass, and made up of a fortuitous concourse of atoms.

Thirdly, That it was produced freely, that it was not an immanent or intrinsic but an extrinsic and transitive act in God, that it did not proceed from the nature of God developing and manifesting itself in this way, but that it was created by his command and is external to him, and that it is really distinct from its producing cause.

The work of creation presupposes all these things, and therefore it is necessary that they should be proved before entering upon the

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grce with the attention they should give to these. Their rule of duty in both cases is not what God has purposed but what God has said. All events are foreordained—those which relate to their temporal as well as those which relate to their spiritual condition. But just as, without taking into consideration the fact that the day and hour of their death are fixed before which they will not leave the world, and beyond which all their efforts cannot carry them, they nevertheless labour as strenously as if the preservation of their life depended solely upon their own exertion; in the same way, without seeking to pry into the mysteries of God's government in spiritual matters, they should render submission to the statement "he that believeth shall be saved," and labour as diligently in the use of means that salvation in this way may be theirs as if success depended wholly upon themselves. Let them give all diligence to prove their calling by closing with the offer of mercy held out to them and by striving to do the will of their heavenly Father, and then they may rest assured of their election.

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consideration of the work itself. But as we have already done so when treating of the existence of God and of natural religion, we shall here take them for granted and proceed immediately to the subject.

Our mode of treating it will be twofold.

I. General.

II. Special.

I. The former of these includes

(*a.*) The name given to the work.

(*b.*) The work itself.

(*a.*) The Hebrew word by which the work is designated is בּרא. It is disputed whether this word denotes production from nothing or from pre-existing materials. In our opinion it is used in both ways and may signify both.

In regard to creation out of nothing, it is applied to the formation of matter itself. "In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth," Gen. i. 1. In this passage it is distinguished from יצר and עשׂה. In like manner God is said to *create* something new, "The Lord hath created a new thing in the earth," Jer. xxxi. 22—to *create*, to *form*, and to *make*, "For I have created him for my glory; I have formed him; yea I have made him," Is. xliii. 7—the first of these words referring to the matter or substance, the second to the form, and the third to the completion of the work.

But there can be no doubt that the word in the original is sometimes applied also to production from existing materials, as when man, for instance, is said to have been *made* or *created* out of the dust of the ground, Gen. i. 26, 27. It is used also in reference to the earth's opening itself and swallowing up Korah and his company. God is said on that occasion to have *made* "a new thing," Numb. xvi. 30. It is employed therefore in both senses—in reference both to production out of nothing and to formation from matter already in existence, and means generally to create an object whether there be matter or not, and to produce by an act of the will and in the exercise of one's own power. To *create* and to *command* are often used the one for the other, Ps. cxlviii. 5. God is said to *call* "those things which be not as though they were," Rom. iv. 17. In the beginning he said, "Let there be light: and there was light," Gen. i. 3.

If it be asked what is the proper and original signification of the word, this may be ascertained by comparing the term in the Arabic language. There it means to *hew roughly*, to *cut smooth*, to *make*

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bare, hence to *create*, to *form skillfully with the hand*, to *make a work perfect in every respect*. Very nearly approaching to this in meaning is the Latin word *creare*, from the obsolete verb *cereo*.

(*b*.) In regard to the work itself, we shall advert

(*a*.) To the cause.

(*β*.) To the effect.

(*γ*.) To the manner.

(*δ*.) To the relation in which the work stands to its end.

(*a*.) The creating cause we shall consider.

(*) Essentially.

(**) Economically.

(*) Creation is the incommunicable act of God as he is considered in the former of these aspects. But as this has been denied by some both in ancient and modern times, who have supposed that the act of creating is communicable with the creature (as the Lutherans, for instance, and others who maintained that it was shared by Christ as a man, by virtue of the union of the human nature with the divine) it will be worth while to prove the truth of our opinion, especially as on it depends the force of the argument in favour of the divinity of Christ, drawn from the ascription of the work of creation to him. We will shew therefore that the act of creation is peculiar to God—that it resides originally in him and is incommunicable.

That the act of creation is peculiar to God and that creation is a mark of divinity is proved

1. From Scripture. When God proved his divinity and refuted that of the heathen deities, he appealed to the work of creation, Is. xl. 26. The apostle Paul reasoned in the same way, Rom. i. 20. The prophet Jeremiah, in like manner, gives creation as a mark of the true God, and that of a false deity that he had not created the heavens and the earth. When the Jews were about to be led away into captivity to Babylon God put the following words into their mouths, in order that they might refute their idolatrous oppressors, "The gods that have not made the heavens and the earth, even they shall perish from the earth and from under these heavens," Jer. x. 11. And in the concluding chapters of the book of Job he appeals to this power in proof of his own majesty and greatness.

2. From reason. Creation is an omnipotent act both because it is produced by command of the will and because the infinite distance between things that are and things that are not cannot be overcome

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except by infinite power. Now between the state of being and that of not being there is such a distance, so that the production of matter requires the exercise of a power which plainly surpasses all our conceptions. Creation, besides, is an independent act and an act of unlimited power, for the creator disposes of things as in absolute subjection to him, in the exercise of his good pleasure, and this certainly is the peculiar prerogative of God on whom all things depend. Creation, moreover, is an act of the most glorious description, for by it the thing created is placed absolutely in the power of the creator, and is designed for his service and glory. This is taught everywhere in Scripture, and is plain from the very nature of the case, inasmuch as the thing produced is peculiarly the work of the creator, dependant therefore upon him, and intended to shew forth his praise.

But could God, it is asked, share this power with the creature properly so called. We answer that he could not. He cannot deny himself; he cannot share with another that which is peculiar to himself; he cannot give his glory to another. The creature, besides, is not capable of exercising such power, since he always continues finite, dependent, and subject to another, attributes the very opposite of which belong to the creating cause, whose power must necessarily be infinite. Creation is also, as we have already seen, a perfect, almighty, independent, and glorious act, such an act as is characteristic of Deity, and distinguishes him from the creature. We nowhere read, moreover, that power of this kind is communicated to the creature, nor does Scripture teach such a doctrine.

Some indeed hold that the Son of God is represented in the sacred volume as the creator of all things; but then the fair and sound conclusion which we draw from this is that he is the true God and not a mere man.

They appeal also to the miracles wrought by the prophets which required the exercise of almighty power. We admit that miracles were wrought by them, but we deny that they performed them by a power of their own bestowed upon them by God. They did nothing else in the matter than command and declare. God himself in answer to their prayers and in conformity to their declaration performed the miracles. The power of working them is beyond the capacity of all creatures, and hence the prophets and apostles declared that they did these things not by their own power but Christ by them. We conclude, therefore, that God alone is creator.

(**) The creating cause, *economically* considered, is the Trinity

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—the Father originating, the Son executing, and the Holy Spirit confirming. This economy or arrangement we have already explained when speaking of the Trinity.

(*a.*) The Father originated the work of creation, both because it is according to his decree and counsel that all things exist, and because he himself laid the foundation of the work in giving existence to matter. He is thus said to have "created the heaven and the earth," while yet he is represented as creating the rest by his word, saying, "Let there be light; let there be lights in the firmament," and they were made.

(*b.*) But the Son is he by whom all things corporeal and spiritual were produced. Thus God is said to have created all things by his word, Ps. xxxiii. 6.

(*c.*) The Holy Spirit is he who has completed and perfected all things and adapted them to their several ends. This appears from the history of the creation in which he is said to have moved upon the face of the waters. But as these points were proved and explained when speaking of the Trinity, it is unnecessary to dwell longer upon them now.

(*β.*) The product or effect of creating power may be viewed

(*) Verbally.

(**) Really.

(*) The names given to this effect in Scripture are such as are agreeable to the popular understanding. For example, speaking according to the popular notion of a circumference and a centre, this product or effect is called heaven and earth. Then from the relation in which the things created stand to our senses, they are called "visible and invisible," Col. i. 16. In respect of the order, beauty, and harmony by which creation is characterized, it is called κόσμος, (*mundus,*) a name supposed to have been first given to it by Pythagoras. In respect of duration, moreover, it is called in Hebrew עולם, and in Greek αἰὼν, because its termination is uncertain and because of all that we see it lasts longest. For this reason it has names given to it which denote eternity, but which generally refer only to its very long continuance. Omitting other terms let us now consider the effect of creating power

(**) *Really.* In this view it is a collection of various corporeal and spiritual objects closely connected with and related to each other, arranged in regular order, and marked by almost endless and unlimited diversity. Corporeal objects are of different kinds and are composed of various elements. But we cannot now enter minutely

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into the explanation of them. Only let it be observed that such an effect,—such a world as we have described,—is but *one* and *finite*.

(*a*.) We say that it is *one*, inasmuch as there is no evidence of the contrary. But if it be asked whether there are not more, we reply that there is ambiguity in the question put. For if by the universe be understood absolutely everything that exists, it certainly follows of itself that, as such, it is and can be only *one*. But if it be understood as a certain system or collection of bodies that have a relation to each other, then there may be various such systems, although reason does not teach that there are really more than one. We say therefore that the universe is one, that there is only one system, seeing that there is no reason why we should suppose that there are more, and that Scripture makes mention of no more.

(*b*.) We said that the effect or the universe is *finite*, so that it cannot be infinite. For whatever is made up of finite parts is finite, nor can the parts of an object taken together make that object infinite. This implies a contradiction. The nature of a body besides does not admit infinity. A body has form; but that which has form must have limits, and therefore length, breadth, and thickness, for an object which has not these has no form.

(γ.) In regard to the manner in which God produced this effect we remark that it is either

(*) Interior or
(**) Exterior.

(*) By the *interior* we mean that God produced the effect by the bidding of his will, without means, without instruments, without labour. This is expressly stated in Scripture, for in the history of the creation we read "Let there be light, and there was light." He is said to have commanded and called by his word. Reason also confirms this. For this manner of calling things into being, by the command of his will namely, is singularly worthy of God, for it is a perfect manner which bears witness of the omnipotence of the agent. But this manner of creating from nothing is also singularly appropriate; for where nothing exists, there is no external means or instrument. The only means is an omnipotent command, of which however we can form no idea.

(**) We have no knowledge of the *exterior* mode except from Scripture. And as revelation is the only source of our information on this point, God, by Moses, provided that this information should be communicated to us, that we might know his goodness, that we might distinguish the God of Israel as creator from false gods and

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that we might have disclosed to us the origin of the human race, Gen. i. Moses has left this remarkable account, from which it is evident that the universe was produced by the command of God in the space of six successive days. For our opinion is that he gives an account of the formation not only of our earth as designed for the use of man and of the inferior animals, but of the universe itself and of all its parts, especially however in reference to us, and not, as some suppose, that he recorded not the production of the material universe but only the appointment of it to our use and as it first presented itself to our senses.

(*a.*) This latter opinion is directly opposed to the simplicity of the account given by Moses; for he introduces God as saying "Let there be light; let there be a firmament," &c.; not let them appear only, or let them occupy a particular place and serve a particular end.

(*b.*) This opinion is opposed also to the order of the Mosaic narrative, for on the fourth day it is said that God at length produced the sun and the moon. But if this was meant to be said and understood of appearance only, then they must have formed part of the work of the third day. For on that day the atmosphere was purified and they must have been seen.

But leaving this opinion, which has no foundation, let us examine the Mosaic narrative in which the following things present themselves to our notice.

1. The beginning of creation.
2. The time occupied in creating.
3. The manner in which objects were created each day.
4. The works of each day.

1. In regard to the first Moses has said "In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth." This certainly is to be understood in the ordinary sense of the word. But in this sense the beginning may refer both to the duration and to the period of the year in which anything is done.

(*) In regard to duration the word *beginning* simply means that the universe is not eternal but had a commencement, as reason also teaches. Thus Scripture also says "In the *beginning* was the Word," (John i. 1) by whom all things were made. "Thou, Lord, in the *beginning* hast laid the foundation of the earth and the heavens are the works of thine hands," Heb. i. 10; Ps. cii. 25.

If it be asked whether there be a possible eternity of the universe, we reply that it is a very imprudent and trifling question, as it is cert-

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ain that the universe is not eternal, and that its absolute eternity is inconsistent with the nature of creation which means a transition from not being to being—a transition which presupposes that the universe at one time was not and which means that existence was given to it. This directly destroys the idea of its absolute eternity. To say that anything was created and that it is also absolutely eternal is to affirm what is contradictory. Creation, besides, is a free and extrinsic act. But free actions must have a corresponding cause,—a free agent—and an effect posterior to its cause. Therefore the world cannot be said to be absolutely eternal.

(* *) The question which refers to the season of the year in which the world was created is encompassed with difficulties. It can scarcely be determined, as arguments of almost equal strength may be adduced against both the vernal and autumnal season. On this subject we have spoken in our Ecclesiastical History* and therefore we will not enlarge upon it here. It is not besides a question of such importance as to call for discussion.

2. Moses simply mentions six days as the space of time occupied in the work of creating. Nor are there any reasons for departing from the ordinary acceptation of the word *day*. The affirmation of some that Moses speaks not of ordinary days but of years and of centuries is made carelessly and springs from the preposterous idea that creation proceeded according to mechanical laws. It is besides contrary to the meaning and scope of the narrative. That Moses understood the word in its usual acceptation is plain from these two things, *first*, that the day is distinguished in the ordinary way into evening and morning, and *secondly*, that the Sabbath is mentioned as recurring each seventh day as a memorial of creation, and therefore only six days properly so called must have been employed in the work.

3. In regard to the manner in which objects were created on each of the days Moses simply states that they sprang into being at the command of God and thus instantaneously,—not, therefore, according to mechanical laws, as has been held by some who would compare the account given by Moses with the imaginary system of Descartes. We must therefore rest satisfied with the Mosaic narrative nor is it necessary to discuss the subject at any length.

4. Moses states that on the first day God created the heavens and

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* Institutiones Historiæ Ecclesiæ, vol. i. pp. 52, 53.

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the earth. Here let it be especially observed that he does not summarily record the whole work of creation and then afterwards explain it in its several parts, as if by the heavens and the earth were to be understood every thing which was produced during the six days. By this phrase he means only what was produced on this day. That it is not a summary statement is proved by what is immediately added, that "the earth" namely was "without form and void." By the earth here we are certainly to understand that which he had mentioned in the first verse. If the statement in that verse were as some say comprehensive of what follows, assuredly the earth must be understood in its adorned and perfected state, and then Moses could not have said in the second verse that the earth which he mentioned in the first was "without form and void." By the heavens and the earth therefore we understand only what was created on the first day—not a rude and undigested mass nor chaos, but distinct and separate bodies (as we call heaven and earth) viewed as material.

(*a.*) This form of speech is common in Scripture in which by heaven and earth are usually meant distinct or separate bodies and not a confused and disordered mass.

(*b.*) Moses tells us in what follows that the earth was "without form and void." He presupposes therefore that the earth was a distinct body, but destitute of inhabitants and devoid of beauty and not yet adapted to use by its being stored with abundance and rendered capable of producing fruit.

By heaven and earth we understand separate bodies known and distinguished by these names, but viewed only as matter. Such is the ordinary meaning of the word heaven, excepting the firmament which was formed on the second day, as we read in the verses that follow. And in like manner we understand by the earth the body known by that name, but yet without beauty and without inhabitants and unfitted for use.

Besides the heavens and the earth Moses states that "the Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters." By the Spirit we must understand the person distinguished in Scripture by that name. But what is meant by the phrase moving "upon the face of the waters?" It means, we conceive, nothing more than that it was a sign that abundance and life and fertility originated with him and depended upon him. For the Hebrew word רחף, as is evident from the Arabic and Syriac languages, signifies both to *brood*, to *cherish*, and to render *fruitful*, which may be metaphorically applied to the Holy Spirit.

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God we are told produced light on the same day. "Let there be light," he said, "and there was light." Here we must not understand the sun but the matter of light which was designed to mark the distinction between the day and night until the sun should be produced, and which was afterwards on the fourth day collected into one luminous body called the sun.

When these things were finished "the evening and the morning," Moses tells us, "were the first day." By the evening here we understand not the beginning of the day according to the calculation which the Jews make during their festival seasons, but the close of the preceding day, and by the morning the beginning of the following day. Therefore Moses says "and the evening was," *i.e.*, the darkness came on: just as he who labours during the day rests in the evening and on the following morning resumes his toils. Thus terminated the first day.

On the second day he says that God created the *firmament* (רקיע)—a word properly denoting something expanded or stretched out into length and breadth as gold is spread out into thin plates by the stroke of the hammer. This is the meaning of the word in Isaiah xl. 19. Here however the firmament is an intermediate extended space which divides the waters that are "under" from those that are "above," meaning by the former the waters in the clouds and by the latter the waters in the seas. Before this firmament was made the air was dark and clouded—darkness brooded upon the earth;—the waters were not yet separated, and in consequence nothing could be seen in the direction of heaven. God therefore is said to have made the firmament, that is, to have separated the waters above from those that were under and that were afterwards gathered together into one mass. The firmament therefore is the intermediate space constituting the aerial heaven, in which is the atmosphere. Before the work of this day this intermediate space is to be considered as dark and obscure. God therefore separated the dark particles, removed them into the clouds, and disjoined them from the waters that were upon the earth; so that the intermediate space became clear and transparent, as the air is called by us.

The work of this day therefore consisted in God's purifying the atmosphere. Now the atmosphere, of which there are various regions, is as all know a collection of exhalations and vapours. The central region of the atmosphere is properly the collection and congeries of exhalations of the earth, is pressed by the movement of the firmament into the form of a globe, and is the seat of meteors—those sub-

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lime phenomena whether fiery and composed of sulphurous particles as the lightning, or aerial as the wind, or watery as rain, snow, and hail. But this is not the place for communicating a knowledge of these.

This work occupied the whole of the second day. Many are of a different opinion and refer to this day the laying of the foundation of the earth of which Moses proceeds to speak in the next two verses. They rest their opinion on the circumstance that otherwise he has left the record of the second day's work without the usual benediction and has given a double benediction to the work of the third. After laying the foundation of the earth it is said "God saw that it was good," and after rendering the earth fruitful the same formula is employed. But that formula is not subjoined to the formation of the firmament, and hence they conclude that this was not the only thing that was done on the second day, and that the separation of the land from the waters formed part of the work of that day.

But the formula of benediction is not to be regarded as a mark of a distinct day and of the works of a day. This is evident from the record of the work of the sixth day (verses 25–28) where we read that God employed the formula twice, once after creating the lower animals, and again after the creation of man, and yet these were done on one and the same day. That which marks a distinct day is rather the formula "and the evening and the morning were," &c. This formula is subjoined to the account given of the formation of the firmament, and proves that the whole of the second day was spent in performing that work.

The absence of the formula from the formation of the firmament, and the subjoining of it to the separation of the land from the water and to the fructifying of the earth arose from this, that the first or the formation of the firmament was intimately connected with the second or the foundation of the earth, which foundation was not firm inasmuch as the earth was not separated from the waters that were under the firmament. By the firmament, indeed, God had on the second day separated the waters above from the waters below; but the latter still encompassed the earth. The work was thus as it were only half done, and it was necessary that the earth should be set free from the superincumbent mass. And so when this was completed on the third day, when the separation of the land from the water was effected, the formula of benediction might be added.

The work of the third day was twofold—the founding of the earth and the rendering of it fruitful and serviceable for man and the lower

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animals. The former of these consisted in the separation of the waters from the surface of the land and collecting them into the large receptacles which we call seas. When the earth was created by God it was "without form and void," תהו ובהו. The former of these words denotes that which is confused and vast, which is without order, beauty, and ornament, and in which all things are promiscuously huddled together. The latter again denotes what is empty and destitute of inhabitants and of all ornament, and such was the earth before the work of the third day. The waters in particular stood above the earth and were not yet gathered together into those vast reservoirs which we call seas.

God therefore on this day (.) separated the waters from the earth and enclosed them within their present limits. (..) Established the earth upon the waters and gave it a solid and firm foundation, Ps. xxiv. 2. (.·.) Rendered it so secure that the waters could not again overflow it except by his special providence. (::) Produced what contributed to the earth's stability such as mountains. For these do not owe their origin to the deluge, but were formed to add beauty to the earth. They are serviceable in many respects to men—affording a shelter from the heat of the sun and in some countries from the rising of the waters, and supplying springs and fountains from which rivers flow for the use of the lower animals.

The rendering of the earth fruitful was also part of the work of this day, verses 11–13. God produced trees, herbs, grass, fruits, &c., for the use of man and of the lower animals, and at the same time imparted to them the power of reproduction, so that each species possessed the property of multiplying itself, and it was no longer necessary to create it anew. Hence on this twofold work the formula of benediction is repeated, once at the laying of the foundation of the earth and again at the rendering of the earth fruitful.

On the fourth day God produced the lights—the sun,* the moon, and the stars, verses 14–19. On this part of the work of creation it is unnecessary to say much. Only let it be observed (.) that the moon is called a light, inasmuch as it derives its light from the sun and transmits it to the earth, and (..) that, although it is not in itself a great light, it is so in the first place in reference to the service which

* Not that the matter of which the sun is composed was created on this day, but that the light which had been created on the first day was now collected in him as its great repository, and that in consequence of this he became a *luminous* body.

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it renders to us, and in the second place in relation to our senses to which it presents the appearance of being so. In these respects Scripture ranks it among the greater lights.

On the fifth day God created the inhabitants of the air and of the water—birds and fishes, verses 20–23. "Let the waters bring forth abundantly the moving creature that hath life and fowl that may fly above the earth," &c. The fowl here must not be construed (as some hold who have been misled by a corrupt version of the text) with what goes before but with what follows. "Let the waters bring forth fishes (such is the proper rendering of the passage) and let the fowl fly above the earth," &c.

On the sixth day God produced the inhabitants of the land; first the lower animals and then man, verses 24-31, because for the use or service of the latter the earth was fitted up and rendered fruitful. But of this we have already spoken.

(δ.) The ends of creation and the relations thence arising between the Creator and the creatures open up to us a very extensive and interesting field of contemplation.

The ends of creation are to be considered in reference to God the Creator and to the objects created.

1. In reference to God the end which he had in view was
   (*a.*) Primary or direct, and
   (*b.*) Secondary, indirect, and hypothetical.

(*a.*) The *primary* or direct end of creation in reference to God was the manifestation and celebration of his being and of his perfections—his wisdom, goodness, and power. For that is to be regarded as the end of any thing, to which that thing leads, and which, when carefully considered, it presents to our notice. Now if we view creation in this way, it will readily appear that God has by it manifested his being and perfections. Scripture every where inculcates this, Ps. xix. 1; Rom. i. 20. We see his *wisdom* in the variety, the wonderful order, and singular harmony of the objects which he has called into being—his *power* in producing them out of nothing by his word alone—and his *goodness* in the abundance of good things with which he has stored the earth, and in the happiness which these minister to his creatures. He called into existence the whole system of created things that he might exhibit these perfections and that they might be seen and praised by his intelligent creatures.

(*b.*) The *secondary* indirect and hypothetical end is that which depends on some antecedent which might or might not have been. This antecedent is the fall of man which God permitted to happen.

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The end, we say, arising out of this event was not directly designed by God—the manifestation namely of his other perfections—of his grace, for instance, in saving some, and of his justice in condemning the others, and the acknowledgment and celebration of these perfections on the part of his creatures. The fall afforded an opportunity of signally displaying these in the mediation of his Son, but this was not the end primarily intended by God, as if he had resolved to create man in order that his perfections might be manifested in this way, but the fall intervening he sincerely determined that the world should not irrecoverably perish, but that he would take occasion from it to give an exhibition of his other perfections, his grace namely and his justice, because he did not create the world in vain.

2. In regard to the *creatures* creation is to be viewed in reference
   (*a.*) To the end of its several parts, and
   (*b.*) To its *finis apotelesmaticus* or *the end of its parts as a whole.*

(*a.*) The end of the *several parts* of creation are the uses to which they are designed and the effects which they produce; so that objects are to be considered as appointed to that for which they are respectively suited, for it cannot be that God had no end or design in view in calling them into being. From their effects and uses, therefore, we may easily discover what generally is the end contemplated by them. For example, take the heaven of heavens—it is fitted and designed to be the abode of the divine majesty, the scene of the happiness of angels and of men. Such is the representation which is given of it in Scripture. Then the ethereal heavens in which the sun, moon, and stars revolve, are designed, among many other ends unknown to us, to illuminate other bodies and especially to give light to our world—to contribute to the fruitfulness of the earth—to mark out the alternation of day and night and the vicissitudes of the seasons—and to serve as signs to the husbandman, the sailor, and the physician, by which they may respectively regulate their procedure. According to some, both in ancient and more recent times, they also serve to portend future events. The art of doing so is called *astrology*, which consists in this that the destiny of men, of communities, and of kingdoms, depends upon the stars and may be foretold from their position and influence, or that the heavens are like a book, and the stars like letters, the various positions of which indicate various states in reference to men singly and collectively; or that the heavens may be supposed to exert a certain influence upon the disposition and temperament of men, and thence to give rise to their mental opera-

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tions and their actions. It is true indeed that God has sometimes given ordinary signs of this sort, as the star which appeared at the birth of our Lord Jesus Christ. But it is incorrect to say that the actions and destinies of men depend upon the stars and that this was the end for which they were made. Such an opinion is subversive of our liberty and savours of superstition. No connexion can be proved to exist between the movements of the heavenly bodies and our actions and destiny. Astrology therefore is utterly false. Scripture puts us upon our guard against this diabolical system, and warns us not to credit its delusions. Is. xliv. 25; Jer. x. 2.

In regard to meteoric phenomena such as lightning, thunder, earthquakes, and storms, their end and use are ascertained by experience alone. They are subservient to the providence and government of God, and are the means in his hand of inflicting injury or of conferring benefits upon men according as it is his pleasure to do good to them or to chasten and punish them.

The earth, again, which we inhabit is designed for the use of man and of the lower animals. But whether it is intended to be our perpetual residence and whether it is at some future period to be destroyed, whether moreover it alone is the abode of men and of beasts and not the other planets—these are questions more curious than useful. No proof can be adduced for them either from reason or from Scripture, and our safest course is to make no attempt at their solution.

(*b.*) Creation is also to be considered in reference to *the end of its parts as a whole.* Some have been so imprudent and rash as to maintain that the whole system of created things was made for man, that he is the *finis apotelesmaticus* of all the works of God. They act a wiser part who among the ends of creation assign a place to man especially in reference to our earth, seeing that it has been so framed as to supply him with the means of subsistence and to regale the senses with which God has furnished him. He was placed here besides as its principal inhabitant, and was made capable of contemplating his creator in all his works and of admiring, adoring, and glorifying him. He alone of all the creatures was fitted for this high employment, and hence, after all the works of creation were finished, he was called into being and introduced into the world as into a richly furnished dwelling, bearing upon him the impress of his maker's image and invested with dominion over the works of his hands. But of this we shall speak afterwards.

We now advert for a little to the relations between God and men, to which the work of creation gives rise.

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1. As God is seen in creation to be a Being of infinite wisdom and power, distinct from all created things and independent of them all, we are bound as his rational creatures to contemplate, admire, celebrate, and glorify him as such.

2. By right of creation he is the sovereign Lord of the creatures. We are his property, because by his power he called us into being, and being so called we are placed in a condition of complete dependence upon him. Hence arises the obligation on our part to be subject to his will in whatever form and to whatever extent that will is made known to us.

3. In creation, moreover, he presents himself as the chief good. This work was the result of his goodness. For he so furnished the world that the traces of this perfection might be seen, and he formed man for a happy and blessed end. Hence springs the duty devolving upon us of thanksgiving, love, hope, and confidence.

As God created the world in the space of six days, this in the first place must be referred to his own good pleasure; nor in the second place do we doubt but that he had regard to seven periods of the church's history, and that there is a remarkable analogy between these. We do not mean however to go so far as to affirm as some have done from Psalm xc. 4, that the six days were six thousand years and that the world cannot last beyond that time. So much for creation generally.

CHAPTER XX.

ANGELS.

EXISTENCE OF ANGELS—NAMES GIVEN TO THEM—THEIR ESSENCE—SPIRITUAL BEINGS—THEIR ATTRIBUTES AS SUBSTANCES—WHENCE THEY ARE—HOW THEY BEGAN TO BE—HOW THEY EXIST—THEIR ATTRIBUTES AS SPIRITUAL SUBSTANCES—THEIR UNDERSTANDING AND WILL—THE NUMBER OF ANGELS—THE NATURE OF THEIR PRESENCE—THE MANNER OF THEIR INTERCOURSE.

Let us consider creation

II. *Specially* and treat of the nobler creatures whom God made, namely,

1. Angels and
2. Men.

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1. In treating of *angels* our remarks will be

(*a.*) General and

(*b.*) Special in respect of the distinction between good and bad.

(*a.*) *General.* We take for granted the existence of angels or incorporeal beings who render their services in the providence of God and who were created for his glory. Such has been the opinion in all ages. Heathen philosophers the whole world over have spoken of them and of their services in the government of this world. It is difficult to ascertain whether their doctrine was drawn from tradition and revelation or dictated by a desire to account for the existence of certain phenomena, such as oracles, dreams, omens, apparitions, and such like, for which they found it impossible otherwise to account. There were phenomena of this kind which they did not venture to ascribe to the direct and immediate agency of God, and which at the same time far exceeded the power and wisdom of man. And therefore they deemed it necessary to suppose the existence of an order of beings inferior to God but superior to men, by whose instrumentality these phenomena were produced.

But Scripture assures us that such beings exist and brings them frequently and prominently before our notice. And the wonder therefore is that there should have been among the Jews a sect (we refer to the Sadducees *) by whom their existence was deemed incredible. In what sense they understood the angels mentioned in Scripture, whether as emanations of the true God, or as representations of him in bodies resembling our own, we know not; but certainly they are said to have denied that there are such beings as angels and spirits separated from all that is material, Acts xxiii. 8. They also denied therefore the existence of the soul after death. Admitting then the existence of angels, let us enter upon our treatise. This will be twofold—*verbal* and *real* (*verbalis et realis*).

To the former of these pertains the explanation of the general names given to them. These names have reference either to their nature or to their office.

In reference to their *nature* the name spirit is frequently applied to them, because, as we shall immediately see, they are incorporeal substances.

In reference to their *office* they are called angels, that is, messen-

* Some Unitarians very nearly coincide with the Sadducees in denying the existence of such beings as devils and in regarding good angels as only manifestations of divine power.

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gers, interpreters, or executors of the divine will. The Hebrew word מלאך corresponds to this. It signifies properly on ambassador, him to whom the execution of anything is intrusted. For the root לאך which is Arabic and not Hebrew properly means *he mixed.* Hence it came to signify *to manage any matter*, and in the Hiphil form the person to whom such management was committed, or an ambassador whose peculiar duty it is to order aright the charge or commission with which he has been invested. They are also called רוחים, in Greek *πνεύματα.* Paul styles them both "angels" and "spirits," Heb i. 7.

The latter division of our treatise (*realis*) relates

(*a.*) To the essence of angels and

(*β.*) To their attributes.

(*a.*) It is evident that in regard to *essence* angels are not corporeal beings. This idea is inconsistent with the name spirits which is given to them and also with their operations which require a cause possessed of understanding and wisdom. But are they pure spirits or have they bodies of a more subtile form than ours? This point has been disputed in all ages and still divides the philosophic world.* The ancients held that angels were mixed spirits or ascribed to them spiritual bodies. They had no idea of a purely immaterial spirit, but believed that there was in it some admixture of matter. Nor are there wanting some (as Loersius)† among more modern philosophers who entertain the same opinion.

It seems to us, however, more probable, that they are incorporeal beings, because they are called without any qualification "spirits," and because nothing material is ever attributed to them. Still we believe that they are spirits who can assume a corporeal form, as they have done in their appearances to men, who can operate upon matter in the services they perform as instruments of divine providence, and who moreover can be affected by matter and who are therefore said to hear and to see. They have, as we shall afterwards see, what is analogous to our own senses. Such we suppose angels to be, incorporeal beings, namely, and not like us, united to matter, yet still fitted to hold intercourse with material objects, by

* Some of the early Fathers, as Justin Martyr, Irenæus, Tertullian, and Augustine, held that the angels had bodies, but so refined in their nature as to be imperceptible by any of our senses. In the second Nicene Council, the Church declared her belief that they were endued with a fiery or aerial form. This was afterwards denied by some of the schoolmen who said that angels had no body of their own, but that they could assume one in order to become visible.

† See his *Dissert. de angelorum corporibus*, Duisb. 1719.

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which, as we have said, they are capable of being affected. If they were not so capable they could not act as ministering spirits among men, be of any service in conducting the providence of God, or perform the works which Scripture ascribes to them. Hence they are said to see God, 1 Tim. iii. 16; to hear, Eph. iii. 10; and to speak, 1 Cor. xiii. 1. We venture not to say more regarding them. It would be to no purpose to enquire further.

(*β.*) The attributes of angels may be distinguished into *essential* and *accidental.*

The former belong to them as *substances* and as *spiritual substances.* Considering them as *substances,* we must enquire

(1.) Whence they are,
(2.) How they began to be, and
(3.) How they exist.

(1.) Whence are they? If they are substances they must have a cause from which they proceed—a cause either within or without themselves. Do they exist then necessarily and in virtue of their own nature or have they their existence from another?

We may without any hesitation affirm that they are created beings and do not necessarily exist.

(*a.*) Because, as we have seen, there is one God, one self-existent being—one principle from whom all things proceed, supreme, independent—and therefore angels must be creatures.

(*b.*) Because Scripture represents them as in nature imperfect. But beings that are imperfect in regard to knowledge, power, and other attributes cannot be self-existent. For a self-existent is a perfect being—a being that exists by virtue of his own nature has a perfect existence.

(*c.*) Because God alone is said in Scripture to have immortality. But if angels existed of themselves and by virtue of their own nature, they would have an eternal existence, and be immortal in the same sense as God himself.

(*d.*) Because angels, as Scripture declares, are "ministering spirits," and are thus in a condition of dependence and subjection, having the cause of their existence therefore not in themselves but in him on whom they depend.

(*e.*) Because Scripture represents angels as created beings. They are not mentioned by Moses, indeed, in his account of the creation, because it was not his design to treat of other matters than those which related to man. But it is abundantly evident from other passages of the word of God that they are creatures, Ps. ciii. 20;

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cxlviii. 2. Paul says that all things "visible and invisible" were created by Christ, Col. i. 16. All things are said to have been made by Christ as the "Word" of God, John i. 3; Heb. i. 2. We conclude therefore that angels have their origin from God.

(2.) When did they begin and when will they cease to be? We ascribe to them what is called eternity *a parte post*, not eternity *a parte ante*. For as they are created they must have passed from the state of not being to that of being, and so must have had a beginning. All things in like manner are said to have been created in the beginning, but what kind of beginning this was and at what precise time angels were formed whether before the world or at the creation itself cannot be determined, although it seems to us nearer the truth to say that they had no existence before the beginning mentioned by Moses. This may have been the case indeed, but we have no ground for affirming that it was. Nay, there is ground for affirming the contrary, because Moses says, "In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth," Gen. i. 1. But at what particular time, or on which of the six days of creation they were called into being it is impossible to say. It may be inferred from the language of Job that they existed at the time of the creation, for they are said to have "shouted for joy," Job xxxviii. 7. It is not improbable that they were created on the same day with the firmament. Mention is made of them especially between the work of the second and of the third day, Ps. civ. 4. In this passage the order of creation is observed. The question, however, is not of such importance as to merit discussion. But we ascribe to them eternity *a parte post*. We say that they are immortal, that they will live for ever; not, however, by any inherent power of their own, for they are creatures and will continue to be so, but by the good pleasure of God. Hence those who are to be raised again are said to be like the angels who never die, Matt. xxii. 30. And as they are spiritual beings, they are not subject to death or to a dissolution of parts. Annihilation, indeed, is possible, but we have no evidence to prove that God ever annihilates any substance. Angels, therefore, as spirits, are not subject to a dissolution of parts. They are in their own nature immortal and eternal, unless it can be shewn that God reduces to annihilation any object which he has called into being.

3. What, then, is the manner of their existence? Are they liable or not to a mutable or an immutable succession of moments, thoughts, and volitions? It is probable that, as they are creatures, they exist with a succession of moments and thoughts, to which continual ad-

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dition is made, and that, as they had a beginning, their years are capable of being numbered. God alone is described as being liable to no such changes—as being ever "the same," Ps. cii. 27. So much for angels regarded as substances.

Let us now speak of them as *spiritual substances*. As such they possess the attributes peculiar to spirits—attributes which have reference to *understanding* and *will, knowledge* and *wisdom* belonging to the former, and *liberty* and *power* to the latter.

There is no reason to doubt that the knowledge which angels have is manifold. For (*a*) they are spiritual beings. But understanding and knowledge belong to the nature of spirits, and therefore they belong to them. They have the faculty of knowing things, of forming ideas, and of reasoning. (*b.*) If they were not endued with knowledge they could not act as ministering spirits to God or as messengers of his will. (*c.*) Knowledge and wisdom among men are said to be enlarged and increased like those of the angels, 2 Sam. xiv. 17, 20. Mention is made of the "devices" (*νοήματα*) of evil spirits. Good angels are also introduced as revealing the secret things of God, and as continually beholding his face. These points, however, are not disputed. The only question is regarding

1. The object,
2. The means and manner, and
3. The degree of their knowledge.

1. If we understand by the *object* of their knowledge not what they actually but what they may know, we say that it includes every thing knowable of which the creature is capable. But they know in particular, (*a.*) *God.* This is affirmed of evil spirits also, James ii. 19. It is evident from the relation in which angels stand as the servants of God that he is the object of their knowledge. (*b.*) *Themselves.* This is the property of a spiritual being, inasmuch as he has consciousness. (*c.*) *Each other.* This belongs to the nature of their society, and without it they are not and could not be angels. We read, besides, that one angel defeated the attempts of another, Dan. x. 13. According as they are good or bad, they either benefit or ensnare them. They know our thoughts,* volitions, and bodily actions—they are acquainted with matter, and with

* This is doubtful, if not untrue. The author indeed contradicts or corrects himself in a subsequent part of this chapter, where he says, "unless by some signs our thoughts be revealed, they are beyond the cognizance of angels." In the expositions which we have read or heard of that passage of Scripture in which it is said that "joy shall be in heaven

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all that befals matter. This is evident from the condition in which they are placed, and from the duties which they discharge.

2. In regard to the *means* and *manner* of their knowledge, we have light on some points but are in darkness on others. It is certain that they attain their knowledge

(*a.*) By their natural faculties from which they derive their first and simple notions of things and by reasoning and discourse; for these are peculiar to spirits and are not to be denied to them who are superior in excellence to us. (*b.*) By experience. This makes men wise and prudent, and much more angelic beings who have existed from the foundation of the world and have had a long course of trial. (*c.*) By the intercourse which they have with each other, and which, as we shall see immediately, is of great service in the attainment of knowledge. (*d.*) By means analogous to our senses—not by senses indeed properly so called, for these they have not, but by their being affected in a manner similar to that in which we ourselves are. For sight and hearing are attributed to them in Scripture, and Christ is said to have been "seen of angels," 1 Tim. iii. 16. The wisdom of God is said to be made known to them by the church, Eph. iii. 10. We have already seen that they are capable of being affected by matter; and therefore it is not wonderful that they in this way should come to the knowledge of bodies as well as we, although they have not senses nor sensoria like us. Otherwise we cannot comprehend how they can have any knowledge of what is material. Yet they do know by some means of which we are ignorant. (*e.*) The knowledge which they have, moreover, is derived from revelations made to them directly or indirectly by God. Evil angels also know many things by the intercourse which they hold with those who are good, or by revelation indirectly communicated. But good angels receive

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over one sinner that repenteth" (Luke xv. 7), the angels are uniformly represented as knowing the thoughts of men and as gifted with the capacity of discovering the first movement of the heart towards God. "Heavenly beings," says Robert Hall, "listen to the ministry of sacred truth; they anxiously trace its effects on the consciences and hearts of men, and, whenever a salutary impression is produced—whenever the conscience is convinced and the heart opened to repentance, they bear the glad tidings to their companions in felicity, and *and then is joy in heaven over one sinner that repenteth.*"—Hall's Works, edited by Olinthus Gregory, vol. vi. p. 362. This is virtually ascribing to the angels the prerogative which God challenges as exclusively his own, that, namely, of knowing the heart. Is it not better to say that the "joy in heaven" begins at the throne with him who in the repentance of every sinner sees of the travail of his soul and is satisfied and who alone can know when that change takes place—that the announcement of the happy event is made by him—and that the intelligence is diffused among the heavenly hosts and awakens in its course their songs of praise?

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immediate revelations from God, as in the case of him who conveyed to John the information which he himself had received. For they are the messengers of the divine will made known to them. In like manner also they knew of the advent of Christ into the world.

3. The *degree* of knowledge which angels have is indeed greater than ours. The highest degree of human wisdom is contrasted with theirs, for they are creatures far more excellent than we. Those who have retained their integrity continually behold the face of God, and in this respect, therefore, are superior to us. Still their knowledge is not once to be compared with that which God himself has. They are after all still in the condition of creatures, so that omniscience is removed at an infinite distance from the knowledge which they possess. And thus we may deny that they have an intimate acquaintance with our thoughts, unless these are revealed to them by God, or of future contingent events, except in so far as they may ascertain these by conjecture or by experience.

(*a.*) In regard to our thoughts and actions, God expressly declares that he alone knows the heart and the reins, 1 Kings viii. 39; Jer. xvii. 10; Rev. ii. 23. This is agreeable to the very nature of the case; because assuredly no one knows "the things of a man, save the spirit of man which is in him," 1 Cor. ii. 11. The operations of the mind cannot be known but by consciousness, and therefore by no other save him who formed us. And unless by some signs our thoughts be revealed, they are beyond the cognizance of angels. So that as far as evil angels are concerned, we are in this respect safe, for they cannot see into our hearts. They may form some conjectures indeed as to our thoughts, for they are spirits possessed of much knowledge, but they can have no certain knowledge regarding them.

(*b.*) God challenges for himself exclusively the knowledge of future contingent events, as the attribute and characteristic mark of divinity, Is. xli. 22, 23. This also is agreeable to the nature of the case: for such knowledge can be possessed only by him on whose will and direction these events depend. And therefore although angels may form many conjectures regarding them, they cannot come to any certain conclusion.

To the *will* of the angels we have said belong *liberty* and *power*.

It is very evident that they are possessed of *liberty*, for not only is this the property of spiritual beings, but without it there could be no distribution of rewards to the one class of them, and no infliction of punishment upon the other. None but creatures endued with freedom can be the subjects of such discipline; and if angels have

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not this liberty, there would be nothing in their actions deserving either of praise or of blame.

Power also is to be ascribed to them, because they are the servants of divine providence, and because Scripture represents them as possessed of this attribute, Ps. ciii. 20; 2 Pet. ii. 11. They are also called "powers," Col. i. 16.

Angels can exert no power physically against God, for they are creatures. But they can do what is morally wrong, they can blaspheme him, disobey his commands, and resist his will, just as men do; but they can do nothing contrary to what he has decreed. They can act contrary to and resist each other, Dan. x. 13. They have power against men in regard both to their bodies and souls; for, according to their own character, they can suggest good or evil thoughts and can awaken good or evil desires. They can work also upon matter, as is plain from their office as servants of divine providence and from the effects which they produce. The stone which was placed at the mouth of our Lord's sepulchre was removed by an angel, Matt. xxviii. 2.

The *manner* in which they exert their power is either *interior* or *exterior*. The latter consists in the inconceivable rapidity with which they execute their commissions, and hence they are compared to the wind, Ps. civ. 4. Of the former we know little or nothing. In general it may be said that they can do nothing by their own authority; for this does not belong to finite creatures, but is the exclusive prerogative of God as an infinitely perfect Being. They can act, therefore, only mediately—by means unknown to us. With the assistance of nature they act upon mind and matter—upon mind through the medium of the animal spirits, on which the various affections and actions depend, and on which they are able to make certain impressions. But of this more hereafter.

In the *degree* of their power they are superior to men, and hence they are called in Scripture by way of eminence "powerful" and mighty. Satan is called "the strong one." But they are infinitely inferior to God—they are not omnipotent—they cannot do any thing on the instant and on their own authority—they cannot produce any effects but such only as are not superior to the laws of nature, for they themselves are bound by these laws—and they cannot work miracles, for this is ascribed in Scripture only to God, and, as we have already seen, surpasses all created power.

The other class of attributes (*accidentalia*) relate

(*a.*) To the number of angels,

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(*b.*) To the nature of their presence, and

(*c.*) To the manner of their intercourse.

(*a.*) There is not one angel only—there are not merely a few, but, as we readily presume, the number both of good and evil is very great. We will prove this afterwards in respect of both. We take notice of it now only for the sake of order.

(*b.*) Their *presence* in any particular place is of two kinds

(.) Spiritual and

(..) Corporeal.

(.) A *spiritual* presence belongs to them as to all spirits, inasmuch as it confines them to a certain place. As circumscribed and limited beings they act. They have what the schoolmen call an *ubi*; *i.e.* they are where they are and in no other place—if they are here they are not there. Such in our view is the nature of this presence. They have a locality, although we cannot explain how they occupy it.

(..) A *corporeal* presence also is ascribed to them, as when they are said to have assumed an external form, whether that form was real or only apparent.

It is questionable whether they have ever appeared in a real body. We nowhere read of their having done so. It is beyond their power to impart life to assumed forms. We read only once, and it is an extraordinary instance, of three good angels appearing to Abraham, one of whom, however, was the angel Jehovah, and of their eating food with the patriarch, and thus giving signs of having real bodies, Gen. xviii. One of them, we say, was the angel Jehovah, for whom in time a body was prepared; but as to the others we cannot presume to give any decision. But if they had bodies, they were so only in appearance, as for the most part were those in which angels have presented themselves to human eyes. Such an external appearance it is not beyond their power to assume, for, as we shall see in the proper place, they can act in various ways upon matter and impress upon it various forms.

(*c.*) There exists also among angels *mutual intercourse*, by which they communicate their thoughts to each other. We cannot deny this in their case, unless we also deny that no social relation exists among them. They would labour under a very great defect if they had no ability of mutual converse. But Scripture speaks of the *tongue* of an angel, 1 Cor. xiii. 1; a term not denoting literally the organ of speech, but presupposing that there is in them the power which we who have that organ possess. If this were not the case, the term would be an unsuitable one in reference to them. A tongue

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properly so called they have not; but, according to their spiritual nature, they have what is analogous to it, and can converse with each other as we do by speech. But we know not how this communication is kept up, or what use is made of it. It does not become us to indulge in conjectures. It may be said that as we impart our thoughts to others through the medium of the air, so also the angels convey theirs by means peculiar to themselves—which is not more incredible in regard to them than that we should do so through the intervention of matter. But on such a subject as this it is safer to say but little and to affirm nothing rashly.

CHAPTER XXI.

HOLY ANGELS.

ANGELS DIVIDED INTO TWO CLASSES—ORIGIN OF THIS DIVISION—HOLY ANGELS —THEIR CONDITION INTERNAL AND EXTERNAL—THEIR CHIEF OR LEADER— GRADATIONS OF RANK AMONG THEM—OFFICES WHICH THEY PERFORM TO GOD AND TO MEN—DO THEY INTERCEDE WITH GOD IN OUR BEHALF? ARE THERE GUARDIAN ANGELS? ARE THEY TO BE WORSHIPPED?

In treating *specially* of the angels we take for granted that they are distinguished in a moral point of view into two classes—some being morally good and others morally evil. The reality of this distinction is evident from Scripture and from the effects which they respectively produce.

A difficult question suggests itself—that namely which relates to the origin of this distinction. Let us therefore view it

1. In respect to God, and
2. In respect to the angels themselves.

1. If the question be considered in respect of God, he must be acquitted from all blame, because evil did not originate with him as creator and ruler but with the angels. For looking at the condition in which he created them we readily perceive that it was really good, not only not evil but in very deed good—that he created them with good faculties and good inclinations, just as he created the first man. This is evident, in the *first* place, from the fact that being holy, just, and good, he could not produce any thing which was not in harmony

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with these perfections and in which they were not conspicuous; in the *second* place, from the end of creation; for God saw every thing that he had made that it was very good, and he created all things for his own glory and that he might be acknowledged and praised by his rational creatures; and in the *third* place, from the testimony of Scripture which declares that the angels were originally placed in an upright condition, but that some of them fell from that condition and did not abide "in the truth," John viii. 44, and are said to have "left their own habitation," Jude 6. The existence of evil angels therefore is not to be imputed to God as creator.

But can this distinction be ascribed to God in his capacity as governor of all things? Did he so direct matters as that a certain number of the angels should become evil? We say no. For he tempts none—he is not the author of evil. All that can be affirmed is that he created all the angelic host in a state of uprightness but with a freedom liable to change and abuse, and thus fit subjects of the rewards of virtue and of the punishment of sin. He gave them power to act as they chose—he allowed them to use their liberty; but he did not prevent them from falling by the communication of extraordinary grace which he was under no obligation of conferring. On the contrary he permitted certain of them to be influenced by evil thoughts by which they revolted from him. For wise reasons he allowed this, but he did not constrain or compel them to become evil —the blame cannot be attributed to him.

This blame is to be ascribed therefore to the angels themselves, who departed from God and from righteousness. They are spoken of as not abiding "in the truth," as forsaking "their own habitation." But what then, it is asked, was the origin of the fall? What was their first sin? This question in the silence of Scripture cannot be easily solved. Divines are divided in opinion on the subject. We say nothing of the ridiculous opinion that prevailed in the first three centuries regarding their first sin—an opinion founded on an incorrect interpretation of Gen. vi. 2.* This opinion is unworthy of refutation because the sacred historian is speaking in that passage of the holy patriarchal line or of the "sons of God" in opposition to the descendants of Cain who were usually called the "sons of men." In the fourth and following centuries a more common opinion was held

* Venema in his Ecclesiastical History (vol. iii., page 364) says that one of the singular opinions entertained by Justin Martyr was, "Angelos stuprum cum mulieribus habuisse, et ita defecisse."

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that pride the lust of power was the origin of the fall of angels as well as of that of man*—that not contented with their condition they aimed at being higher than they were and desired to be like God. Those who hold this opinion ground it mainly upon the fact that this is peculiar to evil spirits who wish to take possession of the throne of God and to receive the worship due to him. It was thus that Satan acted with Christ, Matt. iv. 10. In like manner the following language referring to Babylon is also applied to Lucifer, "For thou hast said in thine heart, I will ascend into heaven, I will exalt my throne above the stars of God," Is. xiv. 13. Their sin is supposed to be referred to in one of the letters of the Apostle Paul (1 Tim. iii. 6), in which he says that "a novice" (*νεόφυτον*) is not to be chosen to the office of a bishop, "lest, being lifted up with pride (*ἵνα μὴ τυφωθεὶς*) he fall into the condemnation (*κρίμα*) of the devil." It was this sin of pride to which Satan tempted our first parents when he said, "ye shall be as Gods," Gen. iii. 5. These arguments have some weight, but they do not settle the point. In the passage already quoted (1 Tim. iii. 6), no mention is made of pride as the first sin of the fallen angels, inasmuch as the sense may be that one lifted up with pride is not to be chosen to the office of a bishop, lest occasion be given to Satan to accuse and calumniate the church" —by his leading such a one to walk unworthy of his profession, which is here expressed by the phrase *τὸ κρίμα διαβόλου*.

Other divines therefore (and principally those of more recent times) are disposed to think that a feeling of envy toward man was the cause of the fall of angels, and that their first sin was their tempting of our first parents whose happiness and honour, and the singular favour with which God regarded them, filled them with pain and stirred them up to involve them in the same destruction and misery with themselves. This opinion is founded on the passage in which it is said that the devil was a liar and murderer from the beginning, John viii. 44.

Nor is this opinion altogether improbable; for (*a.*) In the first temptation murder and falsehood were committed by the devil, as John says in the passage already quoted. (*b.*) From that time he has shewn himself to be the enemy of the human race. (*c.*) After man was deceived the sentence of condemnation was pronounced against Satan and not against man. We do not know, however, whe-

* Such was the opinion of Athanasius, Jerome, and Augustine, among the ancients, and of Luther, Buddaeus, and others in modern times.

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ther these reasons serve as a sufficient foundation for this opinion. It was indeed their first sin but only in relation to man. It does not appear that it was absolutely the first offence which they committed.

It is certain that Satan is the enemy of man and that his temptation tended to the destruction of man; but this only proves that his design was to plunge man in misery. It is uncertain, however, whether it was his first sin. God indeed pronounced sentence of condemnation first upon him; but nothing more can be proved from this than that he had already fallen, and that after having committed this particular sin, he was doomed to destruction.*

On this subject we act the safer part in acknowledging our ignorance, and as Scripture is silent in pronouncing no opinion. In the spiritual dispensation under which they were placed many things may be conceived as giving occasion to the fall of angels,—pride, namely, by which Satan, discontented with his condition, aspired to one of a more exalted kind, to have the other angels in subjection to himself, and to take possession of the throne of God—and envy which led him to regard with pain and malignity the happy and glorious condition in which man was created. These we say may be supposed to have been the occasion of his fall, but we cannot take it upon us to determine. Having premised these things regarding the distinction between the angels, let us now proceed to treat separately

I. Of the holy angels and

II. Of those who have fallen.

I. In speaking of the holy angels we shall advert

1. To their condition,

2. To their ranks or degrees, and

3. To their employment.

1. The condition of the holy angels is twofold.

(*a.*) Internal and

(*b.*) External.

(*a.*) Their *internal* condition relates either to their powers as spirits or to their condition generally.

Their *powers* are understanding and will and the affections which pertain to the will.

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* Cocceius, a modern author, held the opinion which Venema, while speaking of it in somewhat too favourable terms, at the same time refutes. It is impossible to conceive that the angels should have entertained the idea of tempting others to sin except on the supposition that they themselves had already fallen into it.

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In regard to *understanding* the holy angels are singularly endowed. They have a clear and enlarged knowledge of God, of his perfections, works, and ways, and are therefore called angels of light, 2 Cor. xi. 14. They are said to "behold the face" of God, Matt. xviii. 10; and to be "full of eyes before and behind," Rev. iv. 6. The same thing is intimated to us when the wisdom and prudence of a man is praised as contrasted with the knowledge of angels, 2 Sam. xiv. 17; and when God says that no man knoweth the day of judgment, "no not the angels," Mark xiii. 32,—a statement implying that the angels know many things and far more than men do. Let it be observed, however, that their knowledge is not thoroughly perfect but is increased from time to time. For they are represented as desiring to look into the mystery of the incarnation, 1 Pet. i. 12, and the "manifold wisdom of God" is said to be made known to them by the church, Eph. iii. 10.

In regard to *will* they are filled with love to God and to one another, perfectly holy, and ardently desirous to advance the divine glory and the salvation of men. Hence they are called "holy angels," Mark viii. 38; and in the Lord's prayer are held forth as examples to us in the obedience which they render to the divine will, Matt. vi. 10. They are also styled good because they are actuated by benevolence toward men, watch over their safety, and rejoice at the conversion of a sinner, Luke xv. 10. They regard all sin with hatred and aversion and are entirely devoted to the will of God.

Their *affections*, which are more powerful inclinations of the will, are all directed to that which is good—all rightly adjusted—all consulting the glory of God and the salvation of men. For they are called Seraphim, creatures that burn and shine. Strong affections, therefore, though not corporeal, belong to the angels. Scripture attributes to them joy, Luke xv. 10, desire, 1 Pet. i. 12, and such like.

Their *condition generally* is a happy and perpetual one.

They are happy, because they are without sin, without any consciousness of evil, and are continually occupied in heaven. Hence they are called "the angels of heaven," Matt. xxiv. 36, and are said to "behold the face" of God, Matt. xviii. 10. Saints, also, we read, shall in the resurrection be "as the angels of God," Matt. xxii. 30.

Their condition of blessedness is perpetual. They are so confirmed that they cannot fall, not however, as some both in ancient and modern times hold, that this is owing to their own free will, for they are "elect angels," 1 Tim. v. 21, and our future condition in

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heaven is likened to that in which they are now placed. They are confirmed in their state of holiness by long experience and by the favour of God. Nor is it any objection to this that Paul says "Though an angel from heaven preach any other gospel unto you than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed," Gal. i. 8; for the Apostle here speaks hypothetically—he does not suppose it to be true that an angel would do so. It is no doubt a possible thing, but this is not an inference to be drawn from the apostle's language. He only says if even this should happen yet he is not to be believed; but he does not say that it ever happens.

(*b.*) The *external* condition of the holy angels includes

(.) Their residence and

(..) Their number.

(.) Their *residence* is heaven and hence they are called "the angels of heaven," Matt. xxiv. 36. Hence also in the Lord's prayer we read "Let thy will be done in earth as it is in heaven," Matt. vi. 10. Though heaven however be their habitation they are sometimes sent forth from it and act as instruments of God's providence upon earth. Still it is properly the place in which they dwell—the abode of the blessed God and of the perfect happiness of the creatures.

(..) Their *number* exceeds any conceptions that we can form. Scripture intimates this when it speaks of the hosts of heaven or "legions of angels," Matt. xxvi. 53;—of "ten thousand times ten thousand," Dan. vii. 10; and of "thousands of angels," Ps. lxviii. 17.

2. In speaking of the *ranks* or *degrees* among holy angels we shall advert

(.) To their chief or leader and

(..) To their gradations of rank.

(.) Scripture very clearly gives us to understand that one of them is superior to the rest. It speaks of Michael the prince, Dan. x. 13, 21; of Michael "the great prince," Dan. xii. 1; of "the archangel," 1 Thess. iv. 16. See also Jude 9; Rev. xii. 7. But it is difficult to determine who this superior is and what his properties are, whether he be an ordinary or created angel or the uncreated Son of God. We are inclined to suppose that he is the latter, for the following reasons.

Michael is represented as contending with Satan and overcoming him, Rev. xii. 7, 8. Now this is given as the character of the Son of God, and was predicted of him immediately after the fall, Gen. iii. 15. He is said also to have come into the world to "destroy the works of the devil," 1 John iii. 8.

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It is evident from Jude 9 that Michael is the same as the angel of the Lord. We have already shewn that the angel of the Lord is the Son of God. Now if this passage from Jude be compared with Zech. iii. 1, they will be found to refer to the same person. Because what the former says regarding Michael contending with Satan about the body of Moses is plainly taken from what the latter says of the angel of the Lord disputing with Satan regarding Joshua the high priest. It is true indeed as we read in Jude that Michael "durst not bring a railing accusation" against Satan; but nothing more is meant by this than that he could not obtain from him what he desired, and that in refraining from railing he wished to afford to men an example of moderation. It is also true that the body of Moses is mentioned by Jude, and Joshua the high priest by Zechariah; but whatever may be understood by "the body," it is sufficient that Jude and Zechariah either referred to the legal economy which Joshua the high priest represented, or that in the passage from Jude Joshua should be read as in that quoted from Zechariah—the expression "the body of Moses," having probably crept from the margin into the text instead of Joshua by the negligence of the transcribers. But we say no more on this point.

"The voice of the archangel" is called "the trump of God," by which the dead will be raised, 1 Thess. iv. 16. In that passage the expressions are synonymous. "The trump of God" by which the dead are to be raised is the voice of the Son of God, at which, when those who "are in the graves shall hear" it, "they shall come forth," John v. 28, 29; the voice as it were of the archangel summoning the world to judgment. But why is it called a trump? It is properly a figurative expression for the voice of God. "God," says the Psalmist, "is gone up with a shout; the Lord with the sound of a trumpet," Ps. xlvii. 5. And our Lord we are told "shall so come in like manner as" he ascended to heaven, Acts i. 11, and therefore with a shout and with the sound of a trumpet. Thus the voice of the archangel at which the dead will rise is the voice of the Son of God. And we conclude that Michael the archangel is the Son of God and the angel of Jehovah.

If it be asked on what ground the Son of God is the chief of the angels, we reply that he is so on two grounds—both because as God he is the creator of angels, for by him all things were made, whether "visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers," Col. i. 16; and because as mediator between God and man they as ministering servants wait upon him and

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worship him, Heb. i. 6, and therefore are also instruments employed by him in conducting the affairs of his mediatorial kingdom. Hence we find the angels who communicated to John revelations from God saying to him, "I am thy fellow-servant," Rev. xix. 10. They are also spoken of as "ascending and descending upon the Son of man," John i. 51. While Christ was upon earth they are said to have "ministered unto him," Matth. iv. 11. They were present at his birth, during his sufferings, and when he arose from the grave, and attended him as their leader.

(..) We admit that among the other angels there are some superior to the rest in dignity and power. This is evident from the nature of their society, and from Scripture in which mention is made of "thrones, dominions, principalities," and "powers," Col. i. 16. But we cannot define precisely the nature of the order that subsists among them. The Fathers were divided in opinion upon the subject. Dionysius the Areopagite, the author of a mystical theology, held, that there were nine orders of angels arranged under three classes — the first class comprehending cherubim, seraphim, and thrones—the second, dominions, virtues, and powers—and the third principalities, archangels, and angels. But these distinctions are imaginary and have no foundation to rest upon. Dionysius however had an end in view in making such a division of the heavenly hierarchy. According to the mystical theology which he propounded there are three steps by which an individual reaches a state of perfection. The first is that of *purgation* by which he is delivered from every thing that hinders him from enjoying communion with God—the second is that of *illumination* by which he is brought to the knowledge of God and of heavenly things—while the third is that of *union* by which he as it were passes into God and dwells in his nature. The three classes of angels according to his system were instrumental in advancing a man by these steps to perfection—some acting as purifiers, some as illuminators, and some perfecting the union to God and to the divine nature. It is unnecessary to refute an opinion which is so palpably absurd and which of itself must fall to the ground.

3. The *employments* of the holy angels have reference partly to God and partly to men.

In respect of God they are engaged

(.) In praising and glorifying him, as they are urged to do, Ps. ciii. 20; cxlviii. 2. And they are represented as engaged in this

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exercise, Is. vi. 3. They sang a song of praise at the birth of Christ, Luke ii. 13, 14.

(..) In performing the commands of God—both in declaring his determining and in executing his preceptive will. Thus we pray that his will may be "done in earth as it is in heaven," Matt. vi. 10. And the angels are engaged in this work continually with alacrity and devoted zeal. They are called cherubim and seraphim, because they are as it were the chariots of God (Ps. lxviii. 17), whom he employs in conducting the affairs of his providence and in executing his judgments.

In speaking of the offices they perform to men, we must attend

(.) To the relations existing between them and men and

(..) To the duties devolving upon them respectively.

(.) The holy angels are intimately connected with the saints, inasmuch as they have one God and one Lord, have one end in view, are united to them by the bond of love, and will at length partake with them of the same blessedness. They stand to the saints, moreover, in the relation of "ministering spirits"—not of servants to men properly speaking, for they are not inferior in rank to them, but in respect to Christ servants of the heirs of salvation. In his kingdom and in perfecting his body they occupy a very distinguished place, and are therefore said to minister to his people, Heb. i. 14. One of them styles himself the "fellow.servant," of John, Rev. xix. 10.

(..) The offices they perform to believers are these. They rejoice at their conversion, are most solicitous regarding their salvation, and in every way endeavour to promote it. They render assistance to the people of God in various ways—by suggesting good thoughts and excluding such as are evil. We read little or nothing however of the communication which they hold directly or indirectly with our minds, perhaps for this reason lest we should in any measure detract from the Holy Spirit, and confound his operations with theirs.

We may gather from Scripture that they exclude evil thoughts from the minds of the saints, and ward off from them the temptations of evil spirits, Dan. x. 13; Ps. xxxiv. 7. They met Jacob when he was returning to his native land, Gen. xxxii. 1, 2. They presented themselves to Elisha when he was exposed to danger, 2 Kings vi. 17. "He shall give his angels charge over thee," David says, "to keep thee in all thy ways. They shall bear thee up in *their* hands, lest thou dash thy foot against a stone," Ps. xci. 11, 12.

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Papists, however, adopting the opinions of some ancient writers, hold not only that they do this, but that they are also literally our servants, and intercede with God in our behalf, and that every man has his guardian angel. These errors must be refuted.

They believe that the holy angels not only render us their assistance in the way we have mentioned, but that they impart a certain efficacy to our prayers, and thus act as our intercessors and mediators with God, presenting our supplications before him, and adding to them some merit of their own. But although this be an old opinion (mention being made of it in the Book of Tobias), it was nevertheless unknown to those who lived in the earliest ages of the world. It is true that they pray for the church as a body, but there is no evidence that they do so for individual believers, much less that they add efficacy to their prayers and present them before God.

Scripture recognizes Christ as our only mediator and surety, 1 Tim. ii. 5; and we need no others.

No creature can mediate between God and us. We cannot depend upon angels but upon God alone. But we would depend upon them if they acted as our mediators.

They are presented to us besides, as the passages already quoted shew, only as ministering to and watching over those entrusted to their care.

Nor is the opinion against which we contend supported by what we read in the book of Revelations (viii. 3) of the angel's offering incense "with the prayers of all the saints." For he was not a created angel, but a representation of the mediator even of Christ himself. The book is a symbolical one, and the angels who are mentioned in it are representatives of others just as this angel represented the person of the Son of God our mediator and intercessor.

But Papists also believe that every saint has his own particular guardian angel, by whom he is constantly attended. Scripture gives no countenance to this opinion, although it was commonly received both by Jews and Gentiles. It tells us, on the contrary, as we have already seen, that angels encamp around the believer. Jacob saw hosts of them and not one only, Gen. xxxii. 1, 2. Christ says of his little ones that "their angels do always behold the face" of God, Matt. xviii. 10.

It is true indeed, as is objected, that the damsel, who announced to the disciples who were assembled in the house of Mary that Peter stood before the gate, was told by them that it was not Peter but his angel who was knocking for admittance, Acts xii. 15.

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But we reply that even if this were true in the present case it cannot be concluded that it holds true in the case of all believers.

Neither does the form of expression imply that such was the true state of the matter. For although they had really understood that it was Peter's angel, no other inference can be drawn than that such was the opinion at that time commonly entertained regarding guardian angels. The disciples may have spoken in conformity to this opinion, but we are not warranted to infer from their doing so the truth of the opinion itself.

But this was not their understanding, neither is there any necessity to suppose that it was. For the angel who attended Peter was separated from him, while yet according to the Papists he could not leave him. An angel besides had no need to knock at the gate; he could as a spiritual being have found his way into the house without resorting to such an expedient as this.

They must have meant, therefore, that he was a servant or messenger sent by Peter. But be the case what it may, the opinion regarding a guardian and tutelary angel has not the least foundation in Scripture.*

The duties which believers owe to these angels are

(.) To magnify the providence of God who has appointed them to watch over their safety.

(..) To regard them with feelings of reverence and to beware of doing anything to grieve them. As they are said to rejoice over their conversion, so are they affected with sorrow when they see them sinking into carnal security or falling into sin.

(∴) As these angels are observant of good order and are its appointed guardians, it is the duty of believers carefully to cultivate it. To this duty the apostle refers, 1 Cor. xi. 10, where he recommends and enjoins the observance of just and holy subordination, and commands that women should afford a sign on their head that they are under the power of their husbands, "because of the angels," lest the angels, that is to say, who are present in their assemblies and are witnesses of the order and conversation of believers, should see any such violation of propriety and decorum as might cause them sorrow.

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* This is the only solid objection that can be brought against the opinion to which our author refers—the want of scriptural evidence namely in its favour. It was held by the Jews. Origen, Eusebius, and others of the early fathers believed it. It is found in the writings of Hesiod, Socrates, and Plato. It scarcely deserves to be called heretical, as Venema seems to regard it. It would appear, from its prevailing so widely, to be a natural opinion. At any rate it is very harmless.

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This passage is of difficult interpretation, in consequence of the apparently abrupt introduction of angels. It may be therefore that ἄνδρας should be read instead of ἀγγέλους. This change might have been easily made, as the transcribers in copying often resorted to abbreviations. In this case the meaning of the apostle's injunction would be that the women should have a veil on their heads because the men are as angels. In the same sense in the same chapter he calls man "the image and glory of God," but the woman "the glory of the man," verse 7.

(: :) Inasmuch, moreover, as these angels stand so closely related to us, and are held forth as examples, we should imitate them in the obedience which they render to the will of God, and regard them as patterns of virtue and piety.

The Papists, however, do not stop here but add that a more important duty still devolves upon us towards the angels, even that of invoking and worshipping them. But we utterly reject this opinion though it has antiquity on its side. (*a.*) Because Scripture teaches that God alone is to worshipped, Matt. iv. 10. (*b.*) Because it absolutely and without any qualification condemns the worship of angels, Col. ii. 18. (*c.*) Because both the Old and New Testament church in their earlier and purer days knew nothing of such worship. (*d.*) Because the opinion rests on no solid foundation. (*e.*) Because it is inconsistent with the nature of angels, and with the capacity in which they act as the servants of God. The only argument which they adduce in favour of their opinion is this—the angels are employed in dispensing some of the blessings of grace, and therefore we must ask these blessings from them. But Scripture is silent on this point, nor is it agreeable to the condition of creatures, which angels are, to discharge such an office. What they say about angels being our intercessors is no reason why we should worship them. For we nowhere read that they make effectual intercession for men as individuals, but only for the church as a body. (*f.*) Because, moreover, the angel who appeared to John expressly refused the ascription of divine honour. When the apostle, on beholding the glory of the celestial visitant, fell at his feet to worship him, the angel said to him, "See thou do it not," Rev. xix. 10.

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CHAPTER XXII.

FALLEN ANGELS.

NAMES—THEIR CONDITION, INTERNAL AND EXTERNAL—UNDERSTANDING AND WILL, RESIDENCE, NUMBER—THEIR ORDERS, SATAN, DEVILS—THEIR EMPLOYMENTS—ERRONEOUS OPINIONS REFUTED—SCRIPTURAL VIEW—MAGICAL ARTS—TEMPTATIONS—AFFLICTIONS.

The fallen angels, of whom we are now to treat, are presented to us in Scripture under various names. They are called spirits, 1 Kings xxii. 21, 22; "evil spirits," (*πνεύματα πονηρά*), "powers of darkness," the "rulers of the darkness of this world," Luke xxii. 53; Eph. vi. 12; "the angels which kept not their first estate, but left their own habitation," Jude 6; "the angels that sinned," 2 Pet. ii. 4. But they are nowhere called the angels of God, although at first they were so. It is doubtful also whether they are called angels absolutely and without any epithet; unless perhaps in that passage in which Paul asks, "Know ye not that we shall judge angels?" 1 Cor. vi. 3—a passage however the meaning of which is involved in considerable uncertainty.

In describing these angels we shall follow the order we have observed in speaking of the others, and consider

1. Their condition,
2. Their ranks or degrees, and
3. Their employments.

1. Their *condition* is twofold,

(*a.*) Internal and
(*b.*) External.

(*a.*) Their *internal* condition relates either to the parts of which their life consists or to their condition generally.

The parts of which their life consists are understanding and will, and the affections which belong to the will.

Their *understanding* is involved in darkness, and hence they are called spirits of darkness: not because they do not know God, for they "believe and tremble," James ii. 19, but because they do not know as they ought the perfections and attributes of God, the fitness and harmony of his dealings, or the excellence of virtue. Of these things they are ignorant, except in so far as they learn of them from holy angels and from men. In the meantime they are singularly clear in regard to all that is evil; extraordinary acuteness and vigilance are

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ascribed to them. Their leader especially, as we shall immediately see, is spoken of as possessing these properties in a pre-eminent degree.

In regard to *will* they are called unclean spirits, utterly destitute of all virtue and piety. For in respect of God and his will, they account these as nothing; as far as they are able they trample upon his glory; they are in the highest degree indisposed to obedience and obstinately refuse to honour and worship him. Hence they are called also the adversaries of God. Then they regard men with hatred, and on all occasions seek to injure them—they are thoroughly bent on accomplishing their ruin. Hence they are called evil spirits in contradistinction to those that are good.

They are subject to depraved affections—to envy, hatred, lust, and such like. By these they are agitated and rendered continually restless.

Their condition generally is one of misery, and therefore one of sorrow. On this account they are said to dwell in darkness—to have "left their own habitation," and to be separated from God and his fellowship.

In this condition they are confirmed and immovable. There is no hope of recovery for them,* and hence they are represented as bound in "chains of darkness," and reserved "unto the judgment of the great day," 2 Pet. ii. 4; Jude 6. The fire of everlasting punishment is also said to be "prepared for the devil and his angels," Matt. xxv. 41. They do not indeed in their present state feel the full weight of the divine wrath, both because they are reserved unto the "judgment of the great day," and because they themselves, when Christ was on earth, entreated him not to torment them before the time, Matt. viii. 29. But they are in a state from which they are to be plunged irremediably into the deepest gulf of wretchedness, without any hope of consolation, and for this reason they are said to eat dust and to creep upon their belly—expressions emblematic of their condemnation to the miserable condition in which they are placed, Gen. iii. 14.

(*b.*) Their external condition includes

(.) Their residence.

(..) Their number.

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* Origen believed that they will at length repent and be restored to happiness. According to Neander he finally abandoned this doctrine. The divines of the Lutheran Church are not yet quite decided on this point, although the Augsburg Confession condemns all "qui sentiunt hominibus damnatis ac *diabolis* finem pœnarum futurum esse." (Art. xvii.)

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(.) We cannot decide in regard to their *residence*. They are not in heaven but in hell. But where is hell? This is far from being certain. It was the uniform opinion of the ancients, both heathens and Christians, as well as of the Jews, (and a singular opinion it is) that evil spirits inhabited the region of the air, and hence it might be their leader was called Beelzebub, the master or god of flies. To this opinion Paul also seems to refer when he calls Satan the "prince of the power of the air," Eph. ii. 2; and when he says that we have to contend against "spiritual wickednesses in high places," *ὑπουρανίοις* as it should be read for *ἐπουρανίοις*, Eph. vi. 12. The ancients supposed that by this opinion the operations of evil spirits upon men could be more conveniently explained, because they might produce all their effects by the assistance of the air. But we leave this point undecided.

(..) Their number, we learn from Scripture, is great. We read of "the devil and his angels," Matt. xxv. 41; and of "the dragon and his angels," Rev. xii. 7. They are also called devils in the plural number. Nay, they are represented as saying, that they were many, Luke viii. 30. The works which are attributed to them clearly shew this—works which certainly require a great number for their performance, and which cannot be executed by one. We are surprised, therefore, to find one* maintaining that there is only one evil spirit. He was misled by the use of the word devil in the singular number —not distinguishing between the devil and evil spirits. For, properly speaking, there is but one devil, and Scripture speaks of him only in the singular number, but it mentions also his angels. The devil is the chief of the fallen angels, and hence it is that he is spoken of as one; but it cannot be inferred from this that there are not more. But the opinion is unworthy of serious refutation.

2. In regard to the ranks of fallen angels, let us consider

(.) Their leader, and

(..) Those who are subject to him.

(.) Their leader is called by various names, and certain more eminent attributes are ascribed to him. Our knowledge of him is enlarged by these names and attributes, of the latter of which three are specially mentioned, namely, *cunning*, *malice*, and *power*.

We read of his *cunning*. "The serpent," it is said, "was more

* This person's name we have not been able to make out. The book written by him is called in the text *Examen quæstionis Protestantium in Gallia*. Very probably the author refers to a work by Daille, entitled *Vindiciae Apologiae pro duabus Ecclesiarum in Gallia Protestantium Synodis Nationalibus*. Amst. 1657.

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subtle than any beast of the field," Gen. iii. i. Wiles and snares are attributed to him, by which he deceives men, Eph. vi. 11; 2 Tim. ii. 26. Our Saviour speaks of the "depths of Satan," (*βάθη τοῦ Σατανᾶ*), Rev. ii. 24; and Paul, of "his devices," (*τὰ νοήματα*), 2 Cor. ii. 11.

In regard to his *malice*, he is called emphatically the evil one, as in our Lord's prayer. He is spoken of in the parable of the sower as "the wicked one," "the enemy," who sowed the tares, Matt. xiii. 38, 39.

Power is ascribed to him over the rest of the fallen host, Matt. xii. 29. He is likened to a strong man who keeps possession of his house and who cannot be driven from it but by Christ. He is said also to have "the power of death," Heb. ii. 14.

The names by which this spirit is known are principally these. He is called Satan, *i. e.* an adversary. This name is given to him both *generally*, inasmuch as he opposes God, and especially his plan of mercy regarding our race, and seeks as far as he can to hinder their salvation; and also *specially*, in appearing as an accuser of men before the tribunal of God, Job i. 6, ii. 1; Zech. iii. 1; Ps. cix. 6. When he is represented, however, as standing at the right hand of a person we are not to understand that he actually appears in judgment, and there prefers accusations against men; for he is not allowed to enter the presence of God; but that he tries to the utmost of his power to bring about their accusation and condemnation, by urging them to the commission of sin. On this account he is an adversary and seeks to prevent the execution of God's purpose regarding their salvation.

He is also a vile and deceitful calumniator. This is the meaning of the name "devil" (*διάβολος*), which is most frequently applied to him. And he is so designated because he calumniates both God and men—slandering God because, without any regard to his justice and holiness, he does good to sinful men, and calumniating men inasmuch as he makes them stumble on this particular question, confirms them in the doubts which he awakens, and so finds fault with God and accuses him to them, that they become still more alienated from him, and are led to vent their calumnies and reproaches against him.

But this name also signifies a cunning deceiver. We read of the "wiles of the devil" (*τὰς μεθοδείας τοῦ διαβόλου*), Eph. vi. 11—an expression intimating that he is ingenious and crafty in practising deception upon men. The language is metaphorical and is borrowed

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from wrestlers, who by various artifices strive to overcome their opponents.

He is called "a serpent" and "that old serpent" (Rev. xii. 9), in allusion to the history of the temptation of our first parents, Gen. iii. 1; because he is both cunning and malicious, threatening men with destruction, and inflicting upon them a deadly wound. These are the two properties of the serpent, and these are the characteristics of this evil spirit.

He is styled "Beelzebul," or "Beelzebub," *i.e.* the master or lord of flies, or the god of filth, Matt. xii. 24. This name seems to have been derived from that of the god worshipped by the Ekronites, 2 Kings i. 3, who was supposed to preside over the insects that were so troublesome in eastern countries. The Jews in allusion to this gave this name to the devil as a mark of greater ignominy. They were in the habit of doing so in other instances. They changed Bethel into Bethaven.

He is denominated "a roaring lion," because he is hostile and terrible to men, and ceases not in every quarter to assail them and to make them his prey. Such is the description given of him by an apostle, 1 Pet. v. 8.

But we know not how he obtained his supremacy over his brethren, whether he was their leader and lord before he fell, or whether he prevailed upon them to join him in his revolt, and thus forced them into his fellowship and into subjection to his authority. This we say cannot be determined, nor is it of such importance as to call for investigation.

The rest of the fallen angels who serve as soldiers under this leader, and who are in subjection to him as their head, are called devils (*dæmones*). This word in the original does not denote exclusively an evil spirit, but was usually employed indifferently to express a good as well as a bad; nay, it more frequently signified a good, and among the Greeks was applied to God.* But, in the language of Scripture, it is taken in a bad sense, and hence also the ancients made a distinction between *αγαθοδαίμονας* and *κακοδαίμονας*. But as the word *angels* is used in Scripture only in a good sense, so the word *devils* (*δαίμονες*) is used only in a bad sense to denote an evil

* In classical use the word *δαιμων* was not applied to God, but to a being inferior to the divine, yet higher than man. It is equivalent to the Latin word *heros* and to the English *demi-god*. "Παν το δαιμονιον," says Plato, "μεταξυ εστι θεου τε και θνητου." Sympos.

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and fallen spirit. We cannot, however, explain the order and diversity that exist among them. But that there is an order and diversity of some kind may be inferred from the nature of society and from the intimations of Scripture. We read also of principalities and powers, τὰς ἀρχὰς καὶ τὰς ἐξουσίας, Eph. vi. 12; Col. ii. 15. It is enough for us to know that they all cherish a deep-rooted hatred against both God and man.

3. In speaking of the employments of fallen angels, it is necessary to expose the erroneous opinions which have been advanced on the subject and to point out what we deem to be the truth.

It must be admitted for instance that fallen angels really exercise an evil and injurious influence upon the material world and upon both the bodies and minds of men. This was almost universally believed by the ancients. Very many however in more recent times, and especially after the publication of Becker's work, denied altogether the agency of evil spirits.* Becker had no bad design in view, nor has his treatise been altogether unprofitable. But his opinion is utterly irreconcilable with Scripture, and in many respects is calculated to do it injury. His purpose was, and to a certain extent he attained it, (*a.*) To deliver men from that species of fear which was called δεισιδαιμονία—the imaginary dread namely of evil spirits; (*b.*) To remove the impression entertained by some weaker minds that Satan wrestled with them. (*c.*) To correct the erroneous idea cherished by those who concluded that they were the children of God because they were tormented by Satan. (*d.*) To destroy the carnal security of those who regarded Satan as chargeable with the guilt of all their sins, and as having compelled them to their commission. (*e.*) To put an end moreover to those unjust and cruel decisions by which individuals who were suspected of having had communication with the devil were condemned to death and burnt. These were not uncommon before the Reformation, and at the present day are still to be found among some. Becker's object as we have said was laudable enough, and his labour has not been wholly in vain, inasmuch as the decisions to which we have referred have in a great measure been done away. Still he was wrong in not holding a middle course, and in denying all agency on the part of evil spirits

* Balthazar Becker, a preacher at Amsterdam and a disciple of the Cartesian school of philosophy, published a book in 1690, entitled "*Le monde enchanté*," in which, while admitting the existence of evil spirits, he attempted to show that they exerted no power over men. A German edition of this work was published in 1781 accompanied with notes by Semler, by whom the views of Becker were with some modifications adopted.

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upon men without any reason at all for doing so, and in the face of Scripture the integrity of which, if such agency be not admitted, cannot but be seriously affected.

Let us consider then the arguments urged in favour of this opinion, and its contrariety to the word of God.

Becker adduces three arguments. (*a.*) That it is contrary to the nature of a spirit to exert any influence upon matter. (*b.*) That evil spirits have been thrust down to hell and are in chains. (*c.*) That Satan should be regarded as another God if he be the author of all the effects that are attributed to him, and that in this case we would fall into the Manichæan heresy and maintain the existence of two different and opposite principles.

The *first* of these arguments is based on the principle of the Cartesian philosophy, that the *essence of spirit,* namely, consists in *thought* and that it cannot act upon matter or body. But it has been proved that this definition of spirit or mind is false. It is opposed by our own consciousness, for we know that our spirit acts upon and is affected by what is material. If there be a contradiction in holding that spirit has any influence upon matter, what shall we say of holy angels whose operations upon matter are known? Nay what shall we say of God himself who is the purest of all spirits? Is it contrary to him to act upon matter? This argument therefore is weak in the extreme and rests on erroneous conceptions of the nature of spirit and of thought, although it is difficult for us at all to understand how the influence to which we refer is exerted.

His *second* argument is drawn from Scripture in which evil spirits are said to be "cast down to hell and delivered into chains of darkness," 2 Pet. ii. 4. But this is an inconclusive argument from the apostle's language. For it is not to be absolutely and strictly understood. It means nothing more than that these spirits are not only subject to the providence of God, without whose permission they can do nothing, but that they are also reserved to everlasting destruction, *i. e.* bound in chains of darkness—that the fire of hell, as our Lord says, has been "prepared for the devil and his angels." But they are not on this account prevented from producing evil effects among men, Rev. xx. 3, 4. Let it be observed that Satan is represented by John in this passage as "loosed for a season"—a plain proof that his imprisonment is not uninterrupted, but that he is sometimes permitted to go forth and deceive the nations. The language therefore is metaphorical and warrants no other inference than that which we have now drawn from it.

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His *third* argument is, that if Satan produce the effects that are usually ascribed to him, he becomes another God, and Manichæism or the doctrine of two antagonist principles is introduced into the church. Now we do not deny that men are wont to attribute too much to Satan, and that a pretext is sometimes given for objecting to Christianity. For there is scarcely an error or a sin which is not immediately ascribed to him as its inventor or author. This is far from being our opinion. We wish to avoid both extremes on the subject, and if this be carefully done, Becker's whole system falls to the ground.

We say, therefore, *in the first place*, that Satan can do nothing without divine permission. This is plainly taught us in Scripture, 1 Kings xxii. 21, 22; Job i. 12. He is and always continues subject to God and to his providence and is not to be regarded as another God.

Let it be carefully observed, *in the second place*, that, when certain effects are attributed to Satan, Satan alone is not meant but all evil spirits that are diffused over the earth. They are ascribed to him as being their chief, but he is not the only agent.

Let it be borne in mind, *in the third place*, that evil spirits cannot act upon our bodies unless their temperament and disposition be such as to favour their operations. They cannot inflict upon us any diseases they wish—they cannot take possession of any individual they choose. There must be something in the state of the body to permit them doing so. They act therefore not directly but indirectly.

In the fourth place, they cannot act upon our minds except with our will and consent, and unless we be inclined to what they suggest. We wish this to be well attended to. Satan does not produce in us the seeds of sin—he only incites and vehemently impels man who is already inclined to sin. Judas for example was a covetous man; and as Scripture says, "the devil put it into his heart" to betray Christ, John xiii. 2. It is said also of Ananias that Satan "filled" his "heart to lie to the Holy Ghost," Acts v. 3. David was at one time actuated by ambition, and Satan prevailed upon him to number the people, 1 Chron. xxi. 17. To the same purpose also it is said that "he that is begotten of God keepeth himself and that wicked one, Satan, namely, toucheth him not," 1 John v. 18.

In the fifth place, Satan can exert no direct influence over our minds. He can only urge us to do that to which our minds are already inclined. Hence it is evident that if we attend to these limitations we will be in no danger, with the opinion which we hold, of regarding Satan as another God.

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But Scripture would have guarded us against supposing that evil spirits exert any influence upon us, if it be really the case that they do not. For it was given us with the design of instructing us in truths of this nature—truths which minister to our consolation and justification. Becker himself proves in many ways that it is important for mankind to be delivered from this error against which he contends, seeing that it is fraught with such injurious consequences. For the same reason Scripture would have warned us against entertaining any supposition to the contrary, if such a supposition were false.

It not only, however, leads us to ascribe such operations to evil spirits, but clearly intimates and proves their reality, so that (and this has always been properly objected against Becker) the integrity of Scripture could not be vindicated unless their reality be admitted.

Scripture accordingly has in express terms inculcated this doctrine. It mentions that some were assaulted by Satan and possessed of devils and that they were cured by Christ. But it is objected that in these instances it adopts the ordinary style of speaking according to which it was customary to call apoplectic and epileptic diseases by the name of dæmoniacal possessions, because they were commonly ascribed to evil spirits or because they chiefly affected the head in which, according to Galen, is the seat of life—that Scripture therefore accommodated itself to the opinions and language that prevailed at the time without assuming the accuracy of either.*

But this we say is a rash and daring objection. For although Scripture sometimes adapts its language to our senses it does not in such a matter as this accommodate itself to any erroneous opinion which men may entertain regarding it. It has not done so in this case: nay, it was bound to abstain from employing expressions of such a kind as might furnish a pretext for entertaining such a false opinion.

But more than this, there is clear proof that the sacred writers took for granted the agency of evil spirits. (*a.*) Because they make no distinction between devils and evil spirits, and regard devils not as affections but as substances, as active agents. Our opponents hold

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* Thus we find in some of the Greek writers, as in Xenophon and Aristophanes, the expressions *δαιμονᾶν*, *κακοδαιμονᾶν*, and *δαιμόνιον ἔχειν*, used synonymously with *μαίνεσθαι*. And yet at an earlier period we find Homer ascribing such diseases as those for which Galen accounted from natural causes to the influence of a superior power,—

ἔχραε στυγερὸς δαίμων.

Odyss. v. 396.

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that a distinction should be drawn between devils and evil spirits—that the former are diseased affections and that the latter are the spirits in hell. But Scripture speaks otherwise of devils, and says that they know God, James ii. 19. The heathen also are represented as sacrificing to devils, 1 Cor. x. 20. (*b.*) Scripture mentions cases of demoniacal possession, and says at one time that the individuals so afflicted were possessed by devils and Satan and at another by evil spirits, Matt. xii. 27; Acts xix. 12. And Christ also is said to have gone about the country and to have healed those who "were possessed with devils," Matt. iv. 23, 24.

Scripture besides attributes to the possessed effects which are inapplicable to them unless we admit that they were possessed by evil spirits. In the case of the demoniac whom our Lord wished to cure the devils besought him to suffer them to go into a herd of swine, and not to send them to their place of torment (Matt. viii. 31). They went, we read, into the swine, and the whole herd ran down into the sea. Was this request preferred by the possessors or by the possessed? Was it not preferred by a rational being? He enters into conversation with our Lord, and how is this to be explained except on our hypothesis?

In addition to these cases of demoniacal possession we have clear proof from Scripture of the truth of our doctrine in the effects attributed to Satan and to evil spirits. It was Satan who beguiled Eve and who tempted our Lord. He is the serpent to whom the apostle ascribes wiles and snares, and against whose devices he warns believers. It is he who contended with Michael. Are all these things without any foundation in truth? Would they have happened at all if there had been no agency on the part of devils and evil spirits? Why have we so many admonitions to be upon our guard against them, if we are not to regard them as really exercising an influence over us? It is a wretched subterfuge to say that all these things are ascribed to Satan as their first cause—as the original author of evil, and that as all the ruinous consequences of a conflagration are attributed to him who first kindled it, so the miseries with which men have been visited are to be ascribed to Satan as the first cause of the fall. But not to mention that such an explanation serves no purpose in reference to the temptation of Christ, we wish it to be observed, with the view of exposing and overthrowing the opinion that spirits cannot act upon matter, that certainly if Satan tempted and imposed upon Eve, he must have done so through the

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intervention of what is material. Scripture, moreover, does not speak of the operations of evil spirits only at the beginning, but continually attributes to them artifices, wiles, and snares. And therefore we conclude that they exercise an influence over men.

This being established, let us now attend to their works. These may be reduced to three—*magical arts*, *temptations*, and *afflictions*.

Their *magical arts* are of three kinds.

(.) Jugglery.
(..) Enchantments or incantations.
(∴) Divinations.

(.) *Jugglery* (præstigiæ) consists in the performance of apparently wonderful things, either by really changing objects and substituting one in the place of another, or by counterfeiting the appearance of bodies, and by so acting upon the imagination of men that they think they see and feel what in reality they do not. In this way we are to explain what is said to have been done by the magicians of Egypt, who by their enchantments wrought some things resembling the miracles performed by Moses, Ex. vii. 11, 12.

(..) *Enchantments* or *incantations* consist in the infliction of evil upon a person by calling in the aid of evil spirits. Allusion is made to these by Balaam. "Surely there is no enchantment against Jacob," Numb. xxiii. 23.*

(∴) *Divinations* are various and performed in various ways. *First*, by תרפים or images resembling the human form and giving forth, when consulted, oracular responses with a sound resembling the human voice. Mention is made of them in Scripture, Gen. xxxi. 19; Judg. xviii. 20. *Secondly*, by the elements which are various—by the stars, as in astrology—by the flight of birds and the entrails of beasts (haruspicia, extispicia); or by omens and lots. *Thirdly*, by the mouth or breast especially of women, who, as in the case of the Sibyl, was supposed to be inhabited by the divinity. Reference is made to a case of this kind in Acts xvi. 16. *Fourthly*, by necromancy or by raising the dead for the purpose of consulting them. An instance of this we have in the history of Saul, 1 Sam. xxviii. 7–14.

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* See also Eccles. x. 11; Ps. lviii. 5. This part of magic was called γοητεία, in contradistinction to θεουργία, by which the assistance of good spirits was invoked. The former was called *magia atra*, the latter *magia alba*.

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Evil spirits resort also to *temptations*, by which they urge men into error and sin, not indeed by infusing into the mind the seeds of both, but by acting and prevailing upon the mind in which they already exist to listen to their suggestions, and by presenting objects calculated to excite evil desires and to allure them to indulge in the gratification of them. In this way Satan tempted Christ, Matt. iv. 1–10. These temptations are designed to lead men to entertain fatal error or to commit sins, such as unbelief, distrust, carnal security, pride, and others mentioned in Scripture. In plying these temptations Satan employs various wiles and devices for the purpose of ensnaring his victims, but on these it is unnecessary at present to enlarge further.

The afflictions caused by evil spirits are intended either to terrify men, and with this view they present real or imaginary spectres; or they are intended to overwhelm them with sorrow of a temporal or spiritual kind, and to lead even the people of God to despair of the divine favour and of the possibility of their salvation. Of this latter kind may have been the temptation with which Paul was visited, 2 Cor. xii. 7, 8. By the "messenger of Satan" buffeting him we may understand the temptation by which the enemy endeavoured to destroy his faith in the grace of Christ, and to persuade him that he had committed the sin against the Holy Ghost in persecuting the church, and that he was not justified after such an enormous offence in entertaining any hopes of the divine favour. There are not wanting still those who are sometimes tried in a similar way and tempted to give way to distrust and despair. But evil spirits inflict bodily distress also in the form of diseases of various kinds. In this form the demoniacs in the time of Christ were tried. To this class of temptations reference is probably made in the sentence pronounced by the apostle regarding the incestuous person, *i. e.* the delivery of "such an one unto Satan for the destruction of the flesh, that the spirit may be saved in the day of the Lord," 1 Cor. v. 5.

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CHAPTER XXIII.

MAN IN INNOCENCE.

HIS MORAL CONDITION—UPRIGHT—PROVED FROM REASON AND SCRIPTURE—HAPPY, IMMORTAL, INVESTED WITH DOMINION OVER THE CREATURES—NAMES GIVEN TO THIS CONDITION—IMAGE OF GOD—IN WHAT IT CONSISTED—VARIOUS OPINIONS CONSIDERED—ANTHROPOMORPHITES—EARLY FATHERS—SOCINIANS—PAPISTS.

Man stands next to the angels in the scale of created beings. God himself shewed this when he called him into existence. For whereas in his previous works he is represented by Moses as saying "let this or that be," when he was about to create man, he is represented as preparing himself for some magnificent and glorious work and saying, "Let us make man in our image, after our own likeness," &c. On this ground therefore we are to consider man as the noblest of the divine works. His nature clearly shews this. For he has a soul as well as a body and is capable of contemplating and adoring his Creator. He was raised to a position above the other works of God and was invested with dominion over them, and therefore we properly rank him but "a little lower than the angels."

We may consider him in a *natural* and *moral* point of view, or in reference to his nature as man and in reference to virtue and vice.

We omit the former because it belongs to the department of natural theology. In this point of view man is a being endued with reason, consisting of soul and an organised body closely united to each other, and in consequence of this union is the common subject of actions and sufferings. Our knowledge of his nature therefore includes these two things, first his soul and body, and secondly, the union subsisting between them. On the consideration of these, however, we will not enter here.

We purpose contemplating only his *moral* condition, and in doing so will consider

I. The condition itself, and

II. The name by which it is described.

I. Before explaining the moral condition in which man was created, we lay down three propositions which we require to be admitted.

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1. That this condition was agreeable to the nature of God and of man. For God cannot do anything contrary to his own nature or to the nature of the object which he has created. He on the one hand is a holy, just, and beneficent Being, and man, on the other, is a creature endued with reason, possesses powers suited to his nature and is capable of exercising them.

2. That this condition corresponded to the relations that subsisted between God and man as a creature; for nothing can be done by God contrary to these. Now the relations are those of a master and servant, of a father and son.

3. That this condition answered the purpose which God had in view in creating man; for God cannot depart from his purpose. Now his purpose was that man should behold, admire, and adore him and his perfections as manifested in his works. This his rational creatures only could do. And therefore when he looked on all the works that he had made he is represented as saying that they were "very good," *i. e.* suited to the end for which they were created.

These propositions being admitted we proceed to observe that the first man, when he came from the hands of God, was endued with powers of mind and of body in a state of moral uprightness and excellence, so that in his understanding he knew God as he ought and agreeably to his condition as a creature—his will was inclined toward the will of God and desirous to promote his glory; and thus he was righteous, holy, and free from all opposite inclinations and inordinate affections. His body also was adapted to this moral uprightness—without anything that was contrary to virtue and the love of God, or that urged him to do what was opposed to the divine nature and will. Its members, on the contrary, were prompt and ready instruments in doing what reason dictated.

The propositions which we have already laid down require that we view the original moral condition of man in the light in which we have presented it.

For (*a.*) God in his nature is holy and good and therefore can produce nothing which does not bear witness to these perfections, because he cannot deny himself. Darkness cannot spring from light—misery cannot be the result of goodness. He is just and true, and therefore nothing could proceed from him that had a tendency to make his creatures miserable. Such an upright condition accordingly cannot be dissociated from moral excellence. For man as a rational creature requires powers suited to his nature as such, seeing that those which are of an opposite description must be regarded as defective

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and misapplied. (*b.*) God in the relation of a father cannot ruin his child, and as creator he can produce only a creature who is good. And if man had not been such a creature, he would not have deserved the name of the son and the servant of God. (*c.*) Man was created for the purpose of acknowledging, praising, and glorifying God; but he would have been unable to do so if his moral condition had not been such as we have described it.

Scripture itself declares that such was his condition. It tells us that when God looked on the other works that he had made, he pronounced them very good. And he said the same of man. Unquestionably, therefore, man was in this condition perfectly pure. It tells us also that man was made "upright." Eccles. vii. 29, not in respect of bodily stature, but in respect of moral condition, as the expression is used, Job i. 1; Ps. xxv. 8. It says, moreover, that he was made in the image of God, and this image, as we shall immediately shew, consisted in uprightness.

Socinians, however, say that man was created *in puris naturalibus, i. e.* that his mind was not more inclined to moral good than to moral evil, but like a smoothly polished tablet was prepared to receive impressions from either. In proof of this they refer to the account of the temptation with which they cannot reconcile man's upright condition, because they say it cannot be clearly understood how, if such had been his condition he could have so easily fallen.

But this is a very trifling difficulty, for we can only infer that man was not yet confirmed in virtue, and moreover that he was not so prudent and circumspect as to be able to avoid and overcome every temptation. But on the other hand it is plain from the history of the fall, that originally he was upright and filled with love to God, otherwise the arts resorted to by Satan for the purpose of deceiving him would have been unnecessary. We find besides that he was not altogether destitute of wisdom, for Moses informs us that he selected for the lower animals the most appropriate names. We infer therefore that he was furnished by God with powers morally good. It follows by our hypothesis besides not only that his powers were in a healthy moral condition, but also that they were entirely free from any admixture of evil. We maintain this in opposition to the Papists, who say that carnal desire was natural to man, and that the image of God was impressed upon him for the purpose of restraining that desire. Thus therefore according to them man but for this restraint would have been inclined to evil. But according to the proposition which we have laid down God is a holy being from whom

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nothing unholy can proceed. Man, therefore, being the creature of God can have nothing which is not agreeable to the nature of him by whom he was made, and God being good cannot impart to man any thing that is bad. But without adverting to our other propositions in refutation of this opinion of the Papists we are assured from Scripture that in God is no sin, 1 John iii. 5;—that he tempteth no man, James i. 13; that God has not destroyed man but that man has destroyed himself, Deut. xxxii. 5; Hos. xiii. 9.

From this also it is plain what kind of actions man performed in the state in which he was created. These were good, glorifying to God, and conformable to the nature which God had given him. They consisted in contemplating and praising his creator, in rendering obedience to his will, and in dressing and keeping the garden of Eden.

Hence also we may conclude that his condition was one of tranquillity and delight in which he enjoyed peace of conscience and intimate fellowship with God—a condition therefore of abundant blessedness with the assurance of receiving every blessing which a creature such as he was might expect to receive from the creator. The delights with which his original abode was furnished amply confirm this.

Hence too we understand that man was immortal. His body would never have known decay or death, because he was exempt from the cause of death. There was no reason therefore why so noble a creature should be destroyed, because dissolution, as we shall afterwards see, is the effect of sin. But there was no sin in man—the seed of sin had not yet found its way into his nature.

Hence moreover it follows that man had dominion over the other creatures. As he was in a state of uprightness and stood to God in the relation of a son, he certainly had a right to all his father's blessings, and was fitted to exercise dominion over the creatures, inasmuch as he alone was endued with reason and impressed with the divine image. But whether this dominion extended to the use of the flesh of animals is a question of no importance and cannot be determined from the information which Scripture has given us. Moses expressly states that animals were given for food to man, Gen. i. 29. There was no occasion to make distinct mention of flesh as food, nor do we read that it was usual at that time to feed on the flesh of animals. But there can be no doubt as to the right which man had to do so. He was warranted to appropriate the creatures to necessary uses. And therefore when the earth was renewed he invested Noah with the same authority over them, Gen. ix. 3.

II. The condition in which man was created is described in Scripture

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as that in which he bore the image and likeness of God, Gen. i. 26. After the fall he is said to have "come short of the glory of God," Rom. iii. 23. We must therefore inquire into the meaning of the expression image and likeness, and this we shall do

1. Didactically and
2. Controversially.

1. Before entering upon the *didactic* exposition we premise these three propositions or postulates.

(*a.*) That the "image" and "likeness" in which man was created are one and the same and not different. The latter opinion is held by some, who say that the image of God consisted in the natural and reasonable faculties of the first man and the likeness in his virtue and moral perfection. In using these two words Scripture means nothing else than a very close resemblance. But it employs them because every image is not a likeness nor every likeness an image. There may be an image without there being any likeness. The copy (ἔκτυπος) may but inadequately represent the pattern (ἀρχέτυπος) after which it is formed. There may be a likeness also without there being an image, just as two men may be like each other without the one being made after the likeness of the other. The two words therefore are rightly used in conjunction in order that the image may be understood as corresponding to the pattern or archetype and as bearing a very close resemblance to it. This is plain from the form and structure of the words employed by God,—"Let us make man," he said, "in our image," *i. e.* let us make him so as most closely to resemble the archetype. We may add that in Scripture the words are interchanged. For we read in one place of "the likeness of God," Gen. v. 1; and in another of "the image of God," Gen. ix. 6.

(*b.*) That "image" and "likeness" are not to be necessarily understood as having been perfect in man when he is said to have been formed according to them. His nature did not admit of this. The words are to be understood of appearance not of degree. We must not overlook the distinction between the creator and the creature, the infinite and finite;—we must remember that although the nature of God manifests itself in man, man is still only a finite creature. Hence the only image which gives a perfect representation of God is his own Son who is called "the express image of his person."*

* Various opinions have been entertained both in ancient and modern times in regard to what is to be understood by "the image" of God. Some of the early Fathers confessed

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(*c.*) That this image is not in the mind alone viewed apart from the body but in man as consisting of both mind and body, (.) because he is said to have been made in the divine image, yet his excellence does not consist in his having mind alone ; (..) because this image has reference to the dominion given to him over the creatures —a dominion which cannot be exercised by him unless he have both mind and body, (∴) and because the glory of the divine image must manifest itself in his actions while he is on earth, which it cannot do however unless both soul and body be in a state of uprightness.

With these preliminary remarks let us now proceed to explain what the image of God is.

The image of God is a representation in which he is held forth for the purpose of being seen. Let it be particularly noticed, however, that we do not understand by this image something that is personal or concrete but something that is abstract. The word is taken in two senses, *concretely* for a subject resembling God and in whom the divine perfections are seen. In this sense Christ is called the image of God, because he represents God and his perfections— he is the brightness of his glory. In like manner man may be called, but in an infinitely lower sense, the image of God. In an *abstract* sense the word denotes the divine perfections and attributes, inasmuch as in these God is held forth in order to be seen, and these excellencies are designed to awaken in us the idea of God. It does not therefore when employed in reference to man denote a certain distinct subject but only the combination of excellencies and perfections considered as being in that subject. In this sense the word is used in Scripture. Adam is said to have begat his son Seth after his own image (Gen. v. 3) where by image is meant not a subject or a person distinct from Adam, but the nature of Adam in which as it were he himself was seen. Thus believers are said to be conformed to the image of Christ, and in this case the expression is to be understood in its abstract sense.

But in what sense is it to be understood in the instance before us ?

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themselves unable to determine what it meant. Others represented it as consisting of the powers and faculties with which man was at first endowed, and particularly of his liberty to choose between good and evil, while a third party added to these his exemption from temporal death. Among modern divines again it is said by some to consist of his rational soul, by others of the dominion which was given him over the rest of the creatures, and by others of those moral perfections which he has lost by the fall. The representation given by Venema is thoroughly Scriptural.

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We say not *concretely*, but *abstractly*—not for a rational person who is the image of God but for the divine attributes and perfections.

(.) Because Moses, as we have already seen, uses the word image in this sense, Gen. v. 3.

(..) Because no individual besides and extrinsic to God can be pointed to as his personal image. The opinion held by some that Christ was this image is contrary to reason, seeing that there is no occasion for him in a state of uprightness but only in a state of sin. Therefore we understand the word image in an abstract sense for those perfections in which God was manifested.

But in order that we may have a clear understanding of this image we must

(*a.*) Explain the likeness which man bears to God and

(*b.*) As there are various parts relating to this likeness—inquire what place they hold in reference to the divine image, or what is the *antecedent* and *consequent* of this image.

(*a.*) The resemblance referred to may be considered in respect of

* The soul and body of man, and of

** Man as composed of both.

* If regard be had to the soul and body of man, God must be considered as a spiritual substance and his attributes as agreeable to such a substance, in order that we may thus know what parts in man bear a resemblance to God.

(.) God is a spiritual substance, and man in respect of mind has that which is common to him with God, inasmuch as he also is a spiritual substance. At the same time there is an infinite difference in this respect between them.

(..) In regard to the perfections and attributes of God, these belong to him either as he is a substance or as he is a spiritual substance.

As a substance God is underived and independent, having neither beginning nor end and subsisting invariably the same. Hence there is nothing in these attributes which in this respect has any resemblance in man, who exists not by any virtue or power in himself but by the will of God. In this view man is not like God, for man had a beginning, and his having no end is to be attributed only to the will of God. He has a changeable and dependent existence and is liable to succession in point of time.

As a spiritual substance man is endued with *understanding* and *will* whence arises activity of life.

In respect of *understanding* he is possessed of wisdom which in

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God is infinite, original, and peculiar to himself. In our own minds there is in this respect some likeness—the faculty, namely, of understanding, and the wisdom with which the first man was endued, always preserving, however, the distinction between God and man.

In respect of *will*, again, we must consider its acts, and its affections or properties.

Its *acts* are either necessary or free. The *necessary* act of will in God is the love which he has toward himself, and in this respect man has something like it, because he has a strong and necessary love for himself—a love which is bound up in his very nature. There are *free* acts of the will also in God, such as the act of decreeing and of creating, and man in this respect bears some resemblance to him, inasmuch as he has a self-determining power which is called freedom of will, and can act or not, and act in this or that way without external or internal constraint. In consequence of having this freedom he is master of his own actions and without it would not be a proper subject either of reward or punishment.

In regard to the *affections* or *properties* of the will God is true, holy, just, and good—properties which, as we have already seen, were possessed by the first man and belong to the nature of man as such, and in the possession of which we are to seek for the resemblance which he bore to God.

** But if we regard man as consisting of mind and body, wherein does this likeness consist? That likeness is not corporeal but mental or in respect of his whole life and of the active exercise of its parts. And thus as man performs many external actions so God by such actions manifests his own glory. As man endued with mind and body is fitted for exercising dominion over the lower animals, this dominion forms part of the image of God in him; because God is Lord, and man as the son of God is in virtue of the authority which God has given him the lord of the creatures. Moses declares this when he introduces God as saying, "Let us make man, &c., and let them have dominion." This dominion over the creatures, therefore, is part of the image of God. The apostle views this matter in the same light when he calls man "the image of God" (1 Cor. xi. 7.)

(*b.*) We must make a distinction between the parts which we have just mentioned when we enquire into the place which they hold in the image of God. That image as we have said comprehends several things, but these do not all hold the same place in reference to it. We must distinguish between the τὸ *formale* of the divine image and the antecedent and the consequent of that image.

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What is the τὸ *formale* of the image of God, or which of the parts we have spoken of is to be regarded as formal and essential?

In our opinion the τὸ *formale* consists as we have already shewn in moral uprightness and virtue. It is that which when admitted or denied constitutes or destroys the divine image; and this can be nothing else than what we have just mentioned, moral uprightness namely and not the mere circumstance of his being possessed of a reasonable soul or of his being invested with dominion over the creatures.

(.) Because Scripture uniformly represents likeness to God as consisting in moral perfection, as justice, holiness, &c. Thus Christ says, "Be ye perfect as your father in heaven is perfect," Matt. v. 48. "Ye shall be holy," it is also enjoined, "for I the Lord your God am holy," Lev. xix. 2. Christ on all occasions held himself forth for our imitation as the pattern of these virtues.

(..) Because Scripture expressly says that man, though possessed of every thing else, yet if destitute of these moral perfections, is unlike God. Nay he not only has not the divine image, but he has the image of Satan, who is the father of lies, John viii. 44. "Man that is in honour and understandeth not is like the beasts that perish," Ps. xlix. 20; lxxiii. 22.

(∴) Scripture makes the divine image after which man is renewed to consist in an earnest desire after truth, in holiness, in the acknowledging of God, Eph. iv. 24; Col. iii. 10. Now the image after which he is renewed can be no other than that after which he was created; for Paul expressly says that he is restored—that he is made a new creature after the image of God and that he will be reinstated by grace in the same condition from which he fell. By transgression he forfeited the favour of God, Rom. iii. 23; and by his renovation therefore this favour must be regained. And thus we conclude that the τὸ *formale* of the divine image consists in virtue and moral uprightness.

We may thus easily understand what the *antecedent* of the image of God is—what, namely, is required and supposed as constituting that image *essentially* or *formally*. What else can this be than the nature of man as a rational being—endued with liberty—a nature characterised by that original rectitude in the absence of which there can be no such image?

The *consequent* of the image of God is immortality* and dominion over the rest of the creatures.

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* That is, as some say, not an *impossibility of dying*, or an *absolute immortality*, but the *absence of a natural necessity of dying* or a *hypothetical immortality*, *i.e.*, an immortality

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There can be no doubt as to the former of these, because the image of God cannot be destroyed. This is the natural consequence of virtue and original righteousness, because the only cause of death and destruction is sin, which, as we shall see in its proper place, is inconsistent with a state of innocence. Where there is no sin there cannot be death which is the punishment of sin.

Dominion over the creatures is also represented as a consequence of this image, Gen. i. 26. It flows from moral uprightness, both because it pertains to the heritage of God, which man in being endued with the image of God enjoys as his son and servant—and also because man in virtue of this uprightness is singularly fitted to make the right use of the creatures, and to exercise dominion over them according as God requires, and agreeably to his own condition and to the nature of the creatures. By the fall he was rendered unfit for exercising this dominion, and even now the creature groans under his lordly and tyrannical rule, Rom. viii. 22. He abuses the creatures to his own destruction. This dominion therefore with which he was at first invested was the proper consequent of the image of God or of moral uprightness.

2. Let us now briefly advert to the various opinions that have been held on this subject.

There were men in the fourth century who entertained mistaken views of the spirituality of God, and who made his image to consist in the bodily form and erect stature of man. Of this sect who were called *Anthropomorphites* we have spoken in our Ecclesiastical History,* and will not therefore dwell upon their peculiar opinions now. The early Fathers wavered exceedingly in their opinions on this subject, for they regarded the divine image as consisting at one time in the rational nature of man, at another in virtue and righteousness, and at another in the dominion which he had over the creatures. This suspense on their part arose partly from their distinguishing between the image and likeness of God as some in the present day still do, and partly from their explaining only that part of the image of God which bore upon the end they had in view; so that from its properties as defined by them we can scarcely gather what they considered as formally and essentially the image of God, or what its antecedent and its consequent.

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depending upon his rendering obedience to the divine command, and consequently upon his having access to the tree of life.

* Institutiones Historiæ Ecclesiæ, vol. iv. p. 331.

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In more recent times Socinians held that this image consisted in the dominion which was given to man over the creatures. According to their own principles therefore they must maintain that man was created not in a state of moral uprightness, but only *in puris naturalibus, i.e.*, that he was equally disposed to virtue and vice. This opinion we have already refuted.

The Papists again come nearer our own opinion—differing only in this that they regard the image of God as nothing more than an extraordinary and supernatural endowment bestowed on man for the purpose of restraining the carnal desire which entered into his nature. We have already proved that this carnal desire was not natural to man and cannot be considered as consistent with the condition in which he was originally placed, and therefore that the divine image impressed upon him cannot be viewed in the light in which they present it. Their opinion leads them to hold that man after the fall possessed all that at first belonged to his nature, and that he lost only what was supernatural. Of this latter description is the image of God which they say he no longer has, while yet he possesses entire and untouched all his natural endowments, and thus that nothing is wanting to the nature of man after the fall—that he lost only this supernatural quality. But although he has lost nothing pertaining to his nature and essence, he has lost the right use of his nature and the fitness of his natural faculties for that use.

Is the image of God then any thing natural in man? We say in reply that this image properly speaking does not belong to the nature of man as such, for he may be a man, although he be depraved—although he be not holy, just, &c.—as men after the fall are still men. In reference to the first man, however, this image did belong to his nature, as he came directly from the hands of God, because it was not agreeable to the character of God to create him, save in a nature that was upright and innocent. And therefore we say that the divine image was natural to him and could not be otherwise consistently with the nature of God, with the relations that subsisted between God and man, and with the ends, moreover, which God had in view in calling man into existence.

Now the first man destroyed the divine image not in respect of principle but in respect of use. The former still remains even in his fallen state, and therefore after the fall he is said to have been made in the image of God, Gen. ix. 6; James iii. 9. But he lost that image in respect of its use, because, as we shall hereafter see, he is morally indisposed to good really so called.

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CHAPTER XXIV.

PROVIDENCE OF GOD.

PROVIDENCE DEFINED—DOCTRINES OF THE EPICUREANS, STOICS, ARISTOTELIANS, AND PLATONISTS—PROVIDENCE PROVED FROM THE NATURE OF GOD, THE NATURE OF THINGS, CONSCIENCE, AND EXPERIENCE—OBJECTS OF PROVIDENCE—ALL EXISTING THINGS—MANNER OF PRESERVATION, INTERNAL AND EXTERNAL—OPINIONS CONSIDERED—THINGS IN MOTION—MANNER IN WHICH GOD INFLUENCES THESE—MIRACLES—MEN—THEIR CONDITION AND FREE ACTIONS.

We said that the other external work of God is his providence. This subject falls properly to be considered immediately after creation. The former is just a continuation of the latter, because by it all things continue in being for the purpose of being directed in motion and action by the same divine power and will in which creation originated. Now providence is that care of the almighty creator, in the exercise of which he is intimately present with all existing things, causes them still to continue in being and in the motion and action which he at first gave them, and directs them to those ends that are subservient to his own glory, and agreeable to the things themselves.* We call this watchful care on his part his *providence*—a word borrowed indeed from the heathen philosophers, and especially from the Stoics, but well fitted at the same time to express what we mean, and not without its foundation in the language of Scripture.

It is fitted to express what we mean, for providence is not simply prescience, although prescience also be required. Nor is it a certain speculative knowledge of things, but a knowledge also that is practical. It is attributed especially to a king, and to the master of a household, who are said to provide the one for his kingdom, and the other for his family, inasmuch as they have an accurate knowledge of all things in their respective departments, and care for and dispose of them all. In like manner God is represented as the king and governor of the universe, as superintending and caring for all.

But we said that the word also was not without foundation in Scripture. This is very obvious when we consider that it speaks of

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* "Non universo generi hominum solum, sed etiam singulis a diis *consuli* et *provideri* solet," Cic. Nat. Deor. ii. 65.

Κρονίωνι
Ἰδαίῳ ὅστε Τροίην κατὰ πᾶσαν ὁρᾶται.

Hom. Il. xxiv. 290. 291.

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God as *seeing*, *foreseeing*, *knowing*, and *foreknowing*. Abraham called the place where he was appointed to sacrifice his son by the name of JEHOVAH-JIREH, *the Lord will see*, that is, *will provide a sacrifice*. We read also of the "foreknowledge of God," *προγνώσει τοῦ Θεοῦ*, Acts ii. 23; and of his "having provided" or foreseen (*προβλεψαμένου*) "some better thing for us," Heb. xi. 40. In other passages Scripture calls him in respect of his providence, the place in which all things are. Paul says "in him we live and move and have our being," Acts xvii. 28. He is spoken of also as "the rock of ages," on which as on a foundation all things rest," Is. xxvi. 4. *Margin.*

As we take for granted that there is such providence—such watchful care on the part of God, we shall

I. Establish this hypothesis and

II. Explain the doctrine to which it refers.

I. We assume that there is such a thing as providence, and this assumption Scripture proves in various places.

(*a.*) Inasmuch as we have Scripture. For it is the word of God. And if it be so—if it has been given by him, this very circumstance plainly shews that he exercises care over man. It testifies to the providence of God, moreover, because it inculcates religion which in the absence of providence can obviously have no existence; for how can we worship a God who does not love us? But finally it expressly teaches this doctrine. See Job xlii; Ps. civ., cvii., cxxxix., cxlviii.; Is. xl.; Matt. vi.; Acts xiv. 16–18.

(*b.*) This opinion has prevailed in every age among those who have had any religion or any appearance of it. For there can be no religion unless upon the supposition that God takes an interest in and care for the affairs of men, administers rewards and punishments, and cherishes good-will to those who cultivate piety and virtue.

Those philosophers who wish to be thought wiser than the vulgar are often chargeable with playing the fool, and in regard to the subject we are now considering some of them have fallen into egregious error.

The Epicureans, for instance, supposed that this care involved irksome and laborious operations and was adverse to his happiness. This opinion they entertained principally with the view of indulging with greater security their own inclination. For regarding pleasure as the chief good they denied a providence and held that God's happiness was not disturbed by any care which he exercised over the affairs of men.

The Stoics also speculated much regarding providence. No sect,

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indeed, of philosophers so frequently inculcated the doctrine. It is evident however that they confounded divine providence with the provident care of nature itself and understood by providence nothing else than the nature of things acting according to established laws. From this confounding of providence with nature arose their doctrine of *fate* by which they meant the order and concatenaton of causes succeeding each other and standing to each other in such close and intimate connexion that the one that goes before is a sufficient reason for the one that follows. They did not however altogether deny human liberty. They held that man is free in choosing; but that, when once his choice is made, all that follows is in regular order and connexion. They refer to the case of Paris who acted freely in carrying off Helen, and say that all the miseries that followed in the Grecian war and in the destruction of Troy were the necessary consequences of that event. They held therefore that in respect of the direction and order of causes man had no liberty and understood by providence nothing more than na ture acting of herself.

The Aristotelians also acknowledged a providence, but not with sufficient accuracy. They viewed it in too contracted a light, not indeed by excluding from it all sublunary things, but by representing it as concerned only with genera and species and not with individuals and therefore not with men as such. According to this view therefore there can be neither rewards nor punishments.

The Platonists were somewhat more correct in their opinion on this subject, were it not for their fiction of the *plastic nature* and for the place which they assigned to intermediate spirits in the government of the world. On this account they also come far short of sound views on the subject of providence.

These are some of the various opinions that have been entertained on this subject. As Scripture however and the common sentiments of mankind are in favour of this doctrine, we may rest satisfied with these and so proceed with our treatise.

But it will not be unprofitable to establish this doctrine from other principles, from the nature of God, namely, from the nature of things themselves, from conscience, and from experience.

God is an independent Being—the author of all existence, and therefore alone has the power of existing and acting from himself. Whatever accordingly has being must derive its essence and existence from him; otherwise it likewise would be independent, an attribute which belongs exclusively to God.

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He is a God of goodness, yea the supreme good, and desires therefore to communicate of his goodness to his creatures by rendering them happy, as far, that is, as the nature of things allows. We have in this a clear proof that he cannot leave the world to itself but must exercise his care over it and give instances of his goodness.

He superintends and administers all and therefore must attend to the interests of the world he has formed. For he is not a wise workman who completely abandons the work of his own hands and ceases to care for it. But the relation which springs from our position as his creatures requires that as our creator his watchful care be extended to us.

He is a God of wisdom who has created his works for certain ends. It is necessary, therefore, that these works be carried forward to the respective ends for which he designed them. But this cannot be done unless by his providence he himself direct them—for they themselves are ignorant of these ends and cannot by any power of their own attain them.

Let us look, too, at the nature of things themselves. All objects, whatever they are, have the beginning of their existence not from themselves but from him by whose will they exist, and therefore at every future stage they must have the same cause of existence; for whatever any being cannot at first give to itself, that it cannot give at any subsequent period. He who has not the power to originate his own existence is alike unable to continue that existence. He who has the beginning of his being in God must also continue in being by the will of God.

The existence of these things is not necessary but contingent, that is, the moments of their existence are not necessarily connected. Their existence in time to come cannot be inferred from their existence now. This could have been done if they existed of themselves and did not depend upon God. They would have the power of existing in themselves and we might infer from their existing so at the present moment their existence in all time coming; and thus they would exist necessarily and not for a certain end.

These things are appointed to certain ends, as their nature, relation, and harmony shew; but they are ignorant of these ends and unable to attain the knowledge of them, and therefore they require to be directed by God to the purposes for which they were ordained.

Our own conscience gives sufficiently clear testimony to the providence of God. It presents him to us as the witness and the judge, the avenger and the rewarder of our actions, and either inspires us

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with the hope of reward or awakens in us the fear of punishment. But this certainly would not be if there were no providence and if God took no notice of our doings.

Experience moreover teaches us that there is such a thing as providence and that it is both natural and moral.

The former is attested by miracles. But there can be no miracles unless God interpose and for the time suspend the laws of nature. This suspension could not be caused by things themselves, for it implies a departure from the laws by which they are governed; and yet, as we have already shewn, it cannot be denied that miracles have been performed.

Look also at the wonderful difference between man and the lower animals. So great is the diversity that exists among men in regard to features, language, and manners, that we cannot but be struck with the wonderful wisdom which they display, and see in them an unquestionable evidence that God presides over and governs all.

Then we see all bodies most exactly observing a certain law and following the course originally marked out to them—which would not be the case unless God exercised over them a presiding care. This invariable order is seen not only in animate but in inanimate nature.

The *moral* providence of God is proved by the judgments which he has inflicted, as the flood, the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah, and others—by the extraordinary difference which marks the actions of some individuals, as Cyrus, Alexander, Julius Cæsar, and others—and by those established rules which are observed in administering rewards and punishments, and to which our Lord alludes when he says, "with what measure ye mete it shall be measured to you again," Matt. vii. 2. But more of this when we come to the practical part of our treatise.

II. Having established our hypothesis we now proceed to consider providence in a *didactic* and *practical* way.

In the former we shall treat of the object of providence and observe the order laid down by the apostle when he says that in God "we live and move, and have our being," Acts xvii. 28. Providence, therefore, is exercised about things

1. As existing,
2. As moving or producing effects by their motion, and
3. As living or determining themselves to action in a rational way.

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1. The things about which providence is exercised are to be viewed as existing, and not simply as existing but as having certain properties and qualities with which in the beginning they were endued. In reference to these providence is called *preservation*—meaning by this that act of the divine will by which existing things with their original properties are continued in being. Of this preservation we shall explain

(*a.*) The object, and

(*b.*) The manner.

(*a.*) The object comprehends all corporeal and spiritual things—the great, the small, the most insignificant—things in heaven and on earth,—the least not excepted,—of whatever kind or nature they are. For they have all the same relation to God as creator, and therefore they all depend on his will for their perservation. Nor is it unworthy in him to preserve the meanest of the things which he has made. On them frequently the higher depend while they furnish a singular manifestation of the divine wisdom and power.

This is confirmed by Scripture which not only says that God upholds "all things by the word of his power," Heb. i. 3, and that he preserves them all, Neh. ix. 6; but which tells us that "the very hairs of" our "head are all numbered," Matt. x. 30, and that God feeds the fowls of the air, Matt, vi. 26. It is surprising, therefore, that not only heathen philosophers but Jerome* himself (as he seems to have done in his commentary on Habakkuk) should have excluded these things from the providence of God. Jerome perhaps may be understood as speaking in a relative and comparative sense, as when Paul says, "Doth God take care for oxen?" 1 Cor. ix. 9; for certainly in other parts of his writings he represents this preservation as comprehending all things without restriction. But whatever his opinion may be on this point, nothing is more certain than that the object of God's preserving care is absolutely universal.

(*b.*) The manner of this preservation is either *internal* or *external*. It has been disputed among divines whether the act of God in preserving be negative only or also positive. Some hold that it is merely negative, while others maintain that it is positive but without excluding the former.

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* "The divine majesty," Jerome says, "cannot stoop so low as to be interested in knowing how many vermin are every moment produced upon the earth and how many perish, how many flies, fleas, and gnats there are, how many fishes the sea contains, &c."

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Viewed *negatively* this act on the part of God consists in his refraining from destroying the things which exist, in his not suffering them to be destroyed by others, and in his supplying means in the form of food and other helps necessary for their subsistence.

Considered *positively* this act is that by which God causes things to continue by a command of his will similar to that by which he at first called them into being; whereas those who hold the former opinion believe that God in the beginning endued all external objects with a certain power of subsisting by which they will continue for a certain time which he has fixed, without their requiring the putting forth of any new act on his part in order to the perpetuation of their being.

The former opinion is defended by the following arguments.

(.) Because means would be employed to no purpose if God continually put forth an act of his will in the work of preservation. In this case the means of subsistence, food, drink, &c., would certainly be unnecessary seeing that our preservation depends solely upon the command of the divine will.

(..) Because there will be no difference between creation and preservation if God perpetuate the existence of things by a constant repetition of the same act of his will by which he formed them. But preservation and creation are not the same—there is a great difference between them.

(∴) Because we know by experience that things gradually decay. Men for example grow old, their strength weakens, and at length they themselves die. But how can these things be understood, if means are of no use—if all things depend immediately upon the will of God alone?

The latter opinion has stronger reasons to support it,

(.) Because the continuance of the existence of things depends on the same cause to which they at first owed their being. The latter was the will of God and so also is the former, for things which have not the power of originating their own existence have no power to continue it after it has been given them. The cause of their existence is and must at all times be the same. This cause at first was the will of God, and so it must be also at every subsequent period.

(..) Because things subsist dependently. But they would have an independent existence, if they had in themselves the power of perpetuating that existence. Our opponents hold that God has endued them with an internal power, in virtue of which they continue to be. But if in this respect they exist independently of God, we cannot re-

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concile such an idea with the independence of God and with the dependence of the creatures upon him.

(∴) Things have a contingent existence. There is no necessary connexion between the periods of their being, so that from their existence at present a conclusion may be formed with regard to the certainty of their existence at any future time. Our ideas teach us that all things may at every moment perish and thus they exist contingently. But if they had in themselves the power of existing they would certainly exist necessarily to a particular period, and our idea of them would be different from what it now is.

(::) Scripture speaks so decidedly on the subject that it seems entirely to countenance and support those who hold this latter view. For it says that we have our being in God, Acts xvii. 28; that he upholds all things by the word of his power, Heb. i. 3; and that he sends forth his spirit and preserves all things, Ps. civ. 30; Neh. ix. 6.

This opinion therefore is the sounder of the two. Yet it must be held with some modification so as not to interfere with the use of means on the part of God. We know not what power these means possess; but it must be such as depends on his will and on its authoritative exercise.

The *external* manner of preservation relates to the different ways in which things exist and to the different periods during which they continue. Some continue in the same condition without any remarkable vicissitude or change. The duration of some is longer than that of others—some perish sooner than others. In regard to the destruction of existing things, however, we do not suppose that any of them are annihilated—although there is nothing in such a supposition contrary to the perfections of God. But we have no proof of annihilation, and therefore we say more correctly until the contrary be proved that God does not annihilate any of the things which he has made, because he did not create them in order that they should sink into nothing and because he is uniform and consistent in his works.

2. But divine providence is exercised also about things *in motion*. In God the apostle says we live and *move*. This may be said of all corporeal objects, which as second causes are acted upon by God and according to certain laws and motions produce certain effects.

In reference to these objects it belongs to divine providence to prescribe laws according to which they are moved and operate. These are usually called in the language of natural philosophy the

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rules or *laws of motion.* For instance it is the tendency of bodies which are heavier than the air to fall, of those which are lighter to rise, and of all to move in a straight line. These laws second causes must observe and according to these laws they must act. They are called in Scripture God's covenant, Jer. xxxiii. 20.

As God has established certain laws according to which bodies act, so he causes these bodies to produce results in conformity to these laws by operating upon them and moving them, unless when it pleases him to depart from the natural laws and to work miracles.

Now God by his providence exerts an influence upon bodies in every stage of their course. They began to move by the command of his will—or by what is usually called his co-operation (*concursus*), a term employed though not very appropriately to denote the influence which he at first exercised upon bodies. Here again philosophers and divines are divided in opinion regarding the manner of this influence—whether it be *mediate* or *immediate.*

By some it is held to be *immediate,* inasmuch as God is the direct, proximate, and sole cause of all the motion which bodies have and of all the effects which result from that motion. They suppose that bodies have no power to move themselves or to produce effects, and that God by the command of his will alone directly produces these as if no bodies existed, as if there were no second causes.

Others are of opinion that the influence is *mediate,* that means have a certain power, and that by these means God exerts his influence and produces effects.

There are sufficiently plausible reasons for both of these views. Those who hold that the influence is *mediate* or indirect argue in the following way.

(*a.*) If it be not of this kind, then means are unnecessary and contribute nothing to the production of results, and it matters not whether they be employed or not. We see that a body is not moved except by force. But if this force be directly from God, it matters not by what the body is moved. He thus does every thing by the command of his will, and means would therefore be to no purpose and possessed of no power, and no reason could be assigned for his making use of them.

(*b.*) If this influence be direct, then all the motions of bodies of whatever kind they may be must be from God as their immediately acting and impelling cause. However dishonourable, or base, or criminal, they must all be ascribed entirely to him; which cannot however be done without censuring his justice and holiness. One

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man for instance puts another to death. There might be, indeed, the will in the murderer to perpetrate the deed; but the perpetration itself was by God, inasmuch as he is the immediate cause of all motion.

(*c.*) There would be, besides, on the theory of immediate influence, a continued creation of new motion. God produced motion at the first, but he would not cease to produce it at every successive moment. But this is not consistent with his providence which differs so widely from creation.

(*d.*) According to this supposition, also, there would be nothing in miracles but the mere name. For God in working them does nothing which second causes ordinarily do not, and seeing that means contribute nothing to the production of effects it matters not whether he act according to order and by second causes or not.

(*e.*) If God moreover be the immediate cause of motion, then we cannot clearly see why certain effects which are begun are only partially accomplished and not carried forward to completion. If the influence which he exercises be direct why is not the result fully attained? Such effects seem to be acted upon by instrumental causes—they cannot be reconciled with the immediate agency of God.

The advocates of the *immediate* influence, again, urge still more weighty arguments in their support.

(*a.*) Motion, they say, does not belong to the nature of a body, but is an accidental property which it may or may not have, while yet its nature remains the same. It has no cause of motion in itself and is equally inclined to move or to be at rest, and the cause of its motion must be extrinsic to itself and be sought for in God.

It is objected indeed by those who differ that God in the beginning imparted to the nature of things a certain measure of motion, and likewise that bodies communicate this motion to each other. The former we admit to be true as experience teaches; but it is impossible to understand how one body can communicate motion to another, seeing that it has no motion in itself and no reason can be given why it should.

(*b.*) Motion originates with God, and therefore its continuance also is owing to him. For things must have the same cause in continuance as they have in origin—and this cause is God.

(*c.*) Scripture seems to support this opinion. God is said to rain, Gen. xix. 24; to thunder, Job xxxvii. 5; to preserve all things, Neh. ix. 6; to send forth his spirit, Ps. civ. 30.

If one of those two opinions, therefore, is to be chosen, it may with

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greater safety be affirmed that God by his command keeps all bodies in continual motion, but in such a way, although it may not be distinctly understood, that means are not unnecessary. He acts upon bodies by means, by second causes, but in regard to the manner in which he does so, or in what sense bodies can have any power of moving, we are very much in the dark.

The providence of God, as far as regards his co-operation, in reference to the *progress* and *end* of motion, may be viewed in two lights.

(.) In his directing the operation of second causes agreeably to established laws so that they may accomplish the end which reflects glory on himself, and which is in accordance to the condition of men —whether in rewarding or punishing them, whether in conferring benefits or in inflicting evils.

(..) In his producing these results without means, at least without sufficient means—contrary therefore to the laws of motion—whether he employ no instrumentality at all, that which is insufficient, or that which is contrary. In this case he is said to work miracles.

Here therefore we must treat of miracles, and explain their nature and ends.

Miracles as to their nature are real effects—palpable to the senses, contrary to the laws of nature—and produced without means or by those which are insufficient, contrary to the nature of means, or by infringing upon their power. Hence it is evident that they are wrought in opposition to natural laws. Some, however, may be said more than others to be contrary to nature, in respect namely of the means and of the effects which they produce.

All miracles are contrary to the laws of nature. This is their peculiar characteristic. If this be denied, miracles also must be denied. For if they be agreeable to the laws of nature, they are not miracles but ordinary effects.

By a law of nature we understand that order of acting, according to which second causes produce certain effects. This law is either observed or it is not. If it is not observed it is contravened, and thus what is not in conformity is opposed to that order which has been established. And hence it is plain that all miracles must be opposed, in the sense to which we have referred, to the laws of nature whether they be above or contrary to means. But according to the laws of nature means produce certain effects. If the effects however be miraculous, if they be produced without means or without sufficient means, then it is usually meant that in respect of means

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they are miracles and above the laws of nature. But if they are produced by contrary means they are said to be contrary to these laws. These expressions, however, are exceedingly inappropriate ; for as we have said, all miracles are contrary to natural laws. Still in respect of means this distinction may be retained.

Miracles are of various kinds.

(.) There are those which are wrought without the use of ordinary means, as when Moses, Elias, and Christ lived for forty days without food.

(..) There are those which are performed without sufficient means —*i.e.*, effects of a kind which ordinary means could not have produced according to natural laws, as when our Lord with a very small quantity of bread supplied the wants of a vast assemblage of human beings.

(∴) There are those which are effected by contrary means, *i.e.*, which are contrary to the effects which would have been produced by ordinary means, if these means had acted according to the laws of nature. Thus iron, a body naturally heavy, was made to float upon the water, 2 Kings vi. 6 ; the waters of the Red Sea stood up as an heap and allowed the Israelites to pass to the opposite shore, Exod. xiv., and the ravens brought food to the prophet Elijah, 1 Kings xvii.

(::) There are those, finally, which are performed by preventing means from acting in their ordinary way, in which the effect that in ordinary circumstances would have been produced is not brought about. The three young men, for instance, in the midst of the fiery furnace, remained untouched by the flames, and Daniel when cast into the lion's den was not devoured.

On what occasions, some may ask, and for what reasons, does God work miracles? We can scarcely take it upon us to answer this question. But this may be observed that he does not work them except in extraordinary and necessary cases. What these are, however, it is not for us to determine. If we consider those which are known to us, we will find that they are such as the following.

(*a.*) Generally when some extraordinary person is sent by God to men, miracles are performed to shew that he has a divine commission. Such were those wrought by Moses and by Christ in attestation of this fact.

(*b.*) When a new dispensation is about to be established, as in the time of Moses and of Christ.

(*c.*) When matters are in a hopeless condition, as happened in the

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days of Elias in regard to the cause of God, when opposed by the worshippers of Baal.

(*d.*) When God designs to inflict extraordinary judgments, as in the case of the Assyrians, of whom so many thousands fell in one night by the hand of an angel.

We can say no more regarding the time when miracles are performed. This must be left to the wisdom of God who has recourse to them when he thinks necessary. Where means are sufficient, however, they are not necessary. In this case the saying of Abraham holds true, "they have Moses and the prophets, let them hear them," Luke xvi. 29. But still every thing is not to be rashly admitted as miraculous, which is boasted of as such; we must carefully distinguish between miracles and wonders.

3. The providence of God is to be considered moreover as exercised about the creatures who act in the use of reason and liberty. In handling this part of the subject, we shall consider it

1. In reference to men generally and

2. In reference to the different conditions in which men have been and are placed.

In this chapter we shall consider only the former of these, *i.e.*, the providence of God, as exercised about men in general; or

(*a.*) About their condition and

(*b.*) About their voluntary actions.

(*a.*) The condition of men is twofold—*natural* and *moral*—and hence providence is to be viewed according to this division.

The *natural* condition of men is of two kinds, that namely which relates to time and that which relates to eternity. But of the latter of these we do not speak now.

Their condition in time is that to which we shall direct our attention, and the question is, in what way is divine providence exercised toward them in this life? In such a way, the reply must be, that their different conditions and the various vicissitudes that befal them depend upon the providence and direction of God.

The condition of man in this life is fourfold.

(.) Natural.

(..) Economical.

(∴) Ecclesiastical.

(::) Civil or political.

(.) His natural condition—his birth, the various changes that happen during his life, and his death,—these and other things of a similar kind depend upon God. For he has appointed the bounds of

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our habitation, Acts xvii. 26, "there is a time to be born, and a time to die," Eccles. iii. 2.

(..) His *economical* condition, *i. e.* his relations by marriage, by birth, and by contract depend upon God. Scripture uniformly represents God as constituting these relations among mankind. Abraham's servant acknowledged this when he went to seek a wife for Isaac, Gen. xxiv. 42, 48. "What God hath joined together let no man put asunder," Matt. xix. 6.

(∴) His *ecclesiastical* condition is the subject of God's providence in respect of church officers and their various functions, for "he gave some apostles, and some prophets, and some evangelists, and some pastors and teachers," Eph. iv. 11.

(::) The same holds true of his *civil* condition. For magistrates are from God and are called his "ordinance," Rom. xiii. 2. The different forms and the various changes of kingdoms and states depend upon divine providence. The condition of man, too, whether it be one of joy or sorrow, of prosperity or adversity, of good or evil, is from God, Ps. lxxv. 7; Is. xlv. 7; Lam. iii. 38. "Shall there be evil in a city and the Lord hath not done it?" Amos iii. 6, *i. e.* physical evil as is easily understood. Nay, even the things which we call fortuitous, in respect, namely, of ourselves on whom they come unexpectedly, are under the divine direction. For "the lot is cast into the lap; but the whole disposing thereof is of the Lord," Prov. xvi. 33. When one man killed another accidentally, as we term it, God is said to have delivered him up into his hands, Exod. xxi. 13. But although all these are subject to the providence and direction of God, yet the view in which we are to regard that providence and the manner in which it is exercised are not the same. In this respect he acts in different and wonderful ways. In a word, he acts either in the capacity of the beneficent and righteous governor of the universe, or in the relation of a father. As the former he deals with men in his common providence, dispensing rewards and punishments, conferring good and inflicting correction or punitive evil. As the latter, or as a kind father, he deals in his special providence with those who love and fear him, and makes all things work together for their good, Rom. viii. 28. For he regards such with the affection which a father bears to his son—the good things which befal them are the tokens of his favour, while the evils they meet with are his fatherly chastisements and produce beneficial results, Heb. xii. 6, 11.

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CHAPTER XXV.

PROVIDENCE OF GOD.

GOD'S MORAL PROVIDENCE—GOD AS TEACHER, LAWGIVER, AND JUDGE—PROVIDENCE OF GOD IN REGARD TO THE FREE ACTIONS OF MEN — CONCURSUS OR CO-OPERATION—EXTREMES TO BE AVOIDED—PROVIDENCE CONSIDERED PRACTICALLY—OBJECTIONS ANSWERED.

The providence of God is also to be considered in a *moral* point of view or in reference to man's *moral* condition, and consists in his acting towards his rational creatures as a *teacher*, a *lawgiver*, and a *judge*.

He acts as the *teacher* of man, Ps. xciv. 10, inasmuch as he communicates to him knowledge of the very highest importance—such as relates to God and to his perfections, and to the doctrine of rewards and punishments. God acts also in this capacity by the reason which he has given to man, and by the nature of things which he has ordained, so that man in the exercise of reason may attain to the knowledge of God, Rom. i. 19, 20; ii. 14, 15.

He discharges the office of a *lawgiver*, inasmuch as he prescribes laws to men or doctrines as laws, by the conscience, by his own word, by revelation. He moreover sanctions these doctrines, proposed in the way of law, with promises and threatenings, in order that men may be more powerfully excited, nay, in order that he himself may by these motives urge them to cultivate holiness and to abstain from sin.

He acts in the capacity of a *judge*—in inflicting punishments and dispensing rewards, according to the condition in which man is placed. In the present life, however, there are in particular two awful and very sad judgments which he inflicts—*blindness of mind*, we mean, and *obduracy*.

Mention is made of the former in Is. vi. 10. It consists in depriving an individual of the power of understanding and receiving what is true, and of distinguishing between the false and the true notwithstanding the clearest and most certain evidence. By truth we mean only that which is saving, and saving truth, more-

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over, not simply as such, but proved to the conscience in such a way that nothing more is necessary to see it than that the eye be directed to it. If therefore the eye be closed or turned away man cannot discern the light. The eye is the mind or the faculty of discerning, receiving, and judging the truths which are proved to the conscience. Blindness, therefore, is the privation or taking away of this faculty, and the light accordingly is said to be taken away from a man, as he cannot understand and receive the truth which has been proved. This is a very dismal condition—a state of mind closely connected with destruction and involving a charge of guilt. But in what sense can this be attributed to God? Not immediately and directly but indirectly; inasmuch as he in the capacity of judge delivers a man who is to be blinded to those causes which produce blindness. These causes are partly in the man himself, in his prejudices and depraved affections, and partly in the working of Satan in the children of disobedience, 2 Cor. iv. 4. This judgment is inflicted upon a man when he has lived for a long season in the neglect of the truth and has excluded from his mind the love of the truth—and when he has voluntarily closed his eyes in the midst of the light that was shining around him, 2 Thess. ii. 10–12. In this state he is more and more confirmed by Satan.

Obduracy is a judgment sad in its nature and everlasting in its duration. It refers to the stubborn neck that will not submit to the yoke, and means accordingly the wretched condition of the man who cannot be prevailed upon by any reasons however powerful in other circumstances, or by motives however salutary, to forsake sin and to embrace holiness. Thus the Israelites were called "a stiff-necked people," because they would not set themselves to render obedience to the will of God, Exod. xxxii. 9. This judgment was inflicted upon Pharaoh, Exod. x. 1; Rom. ix. 17, 18; and upon Judas, as his history clearly shews. It is ascribed to God improperly, and properly to Satan and to a man's own perverse disposition in habitually sinning. Now God delivers up to this judgment the man who has for a long time voluntarily hardened himself. And hence he falls into such a hopeless state that he can no longer distinguish between virtue and vice.

(*b.*) The providence of God is also exercised about the *free actions* of men, whether they be *internal* or *external*. That these actions depend upon divine providence is placed beyond doubt both by reason and Scripture.

Reason teaches us that man cannot be independent in his actions

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—that God is the governor and director of all, and therefore Lord also over their free actions.

Scripture also represents God as having in his hands "the king's heart," so that "as the rivers of water he turneth it whithersoever he will," Prov. xxi. 1. David says concerning Shimei, "the Lord hath said unto him, curse David," 2 Sam. xvi. 10. Joseph said to his brethren, "it was not you that sent me hither, but God," Gen. xlv. 8. Thus also the Jews are said to have done to Christ "whatsoever" God's "hand and counsel determined before to be done," Acts ii. 23; iv. 28. We are said to "live, and move, and have our being" in God, Acts xvii. 28.

But a very important question presents itself in regard to the manner, namely, in which the providence of God is exercised about these actions. We say very important, both because our actions are free and our liberty must not be infringed, and because many of our actions are wrong and sinful of which God cannot be the cause. In examining this question, therefore, we must proceed cautiously and considerately.

Let us consider the providence of God then in reference

1. To the beginning of an action and
2. To its progress and end.

1. That part of providence which is exercised about the beginning of an action is usually called *concursus*,* a term not very appropriate and applicable rather to an action in progress. We shall employ the term, however, because it is generally received.

In what manner, then, is this *concursus* exercised? Here we must, in the *first place*, avoid two extremes, and in the *second place* open up a middle path.

The one of these extremes is held by those who deny that God exercises any influence on free actions in their beginning; the other is held by those who maintain that God is the efficient, transitive, and creating cause of these actions.

The former of these extremes has been adopted by Socinians and by some of the Remonstrants. According to them God exerts no influence, but only preserves in men the power of acting freely, or generally influences them by exciting their powers to action, leaving the special determination to act to men themselves, or as the

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* It has also been called *prævius vel prædeterminans concursus*. A better term still is *præcursus*.

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Jesuits hold, only concurs with a man who is already acting with the view of carrying his action forward to its completion. All these in reality deny the exercise of any influence on the part of God at the beginning of an action. But such an influence cannot be denied.

(*a.*) Because then man in the beginning of an action must be regarded as independent of God—a view entirely inconsistent with the relation which subsists between God and the creature.

(*b.*) Because then the whole foundation on which the divine prescience rests is removed. For if the beginning of an action be absolutely in the power of man, it cannot be known beforehand by God, seeing that, as we have already explained, there is no other ground of his prescience than that actions depend upon him, and that a free action is not absolutely in the power of man. For if man be equally indifferent as to acting or not acting, certainly it cannot be known beforehand by God whether he will act or not. His knowledge will depend on the action itself.

(*c.*) Because then the knowledge and government of the whole system of the world, on the part of God, are denied. For if man can act or not according to his own pleasure, the direction of the whole mundane system cannot be entirely in the hand of God, because he must then accommodate himself to man who may begin an action or not. He may always impede or stop an action which man begins, but according to this theory he can do nothing until it is begun. In this way therefore the reins of government are taken out of his hands, in as far namely as those things are concerned which depend upon men and upon the exercise of their liberty.

But if this extreme should be avoided, much more should the other —the extreme, namely, which represents God as the efficient, transitive, and creating cause of our actions, and man as a mere instrument, who acts indeed with a consciousness of what he does, but whose actions at the same time have God for their producing cause. This opinion which was held by Malebranche and other philosophers has been imprudently adopted even by some amongst ourselves, and, notwithstanding the modifications to which they would subject it, has in reality the same tendency as the former.

It should be rejected

(*a.*) Because it takes away all liberty on the part of man, and if this be taken away, there is no room for rewards and punishments—there is no such thing as blame or the appearance of blame—nor can man be called in question for his actions. Now that all liberty, ac-

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cording to this opinion, is taken away is evident if we attend to what we experience in ourselves and to the very nature of liberty. For it belongs to the nature of liberty. (.) That our action be performed in the exercise of our own power. (..) That it be done from reasons moving us so to act. (∴) That we always have the power of doing or not doing the contrary—whether that power be what we call proximate as in indifferent things, or remote as in those which depend upon the love of God, and are connected with it—a power which has place in the liberty of spontaneity. This liberty we say cannot but be infringed, if God be considered as the producing cause of our actions. For thus we do not act by any power of our own, nor have we the power of acting otherwise than we do.

(*b.*) If God be the producing cause of our actions, he will be their author. But this is absurd. For he would thus punish what he himself does. It might thus be said that falsehood and murder and adultery are to be attributed to him.

(*c.*) If he be the efficient cause of our actions, then he must be held to be the author of sin. This consequence is unavoidable. As to the distinction which some make between the *matter* and *form* of an action, or between an action and its moral pravity, this is partly false and partly does serve the purpose, because he who performs an action *materially* performs it also *formally*—the two are inseparable. To say that God is above law, and may therefore cause in us what is sin, not in respect of himself, but in respect of ourselves who are in subjection to his law, is no less absurd, because God is a law to himself, he can do nothing contrary to the holiness, justice, and goodness of his own nature; and because, if it be held that he produces sinful actions in us, he must be regarded as the author of sin, and thus his conduct could not be vindicated in efficiently causing what in as far as we are concerned is sin, and what he punishes when found in us. As he is a Being therefore of light and holiness, he cannot immediately do what is opposed to the law which he himself has instituted. He tempteth no man, James i. 13. Lust is not of the Father, 1 John ii. 16.

These two extremes, therefore, must be avoided.

A middle course, we think, may be found out. According to our hypothesis the co-operation (*concursus*) of God has to do with our free actions, whether they be good or bad, in these respects:—

(.) That in their origin they so depend upon him that those which are good are from him, but that those which are bad are not from him

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as their efficient cause, and at the same time are not performed independently of him.

(..) That still the actions are our own, and are performed in the exercise of our own powers and with the thorough conviction of our own liberty in doing them.

It is exceedingly difficult to understand and explain the manner in which the divine influence is exercised in reference to our actions without affecting our liberty, because in regard to the manner of things generally we are very much in the dark. This we may say, however, that God not only preserves the faculties which he has given us, endues us with the power of acting, and in general excites us to act, but

(†) He produces good actions in us by his Spirit—in such a way, however, that our liberty remains entire. How is this, it may be asked? We answer, by applying to our minds motives possessed of such efficacy that the result follows. The whole of our liberty depends on this that we are influenced to action by the force of motives. If God therefore works by these motives he may be held to be the author of all good actions, while at the same time no infringement is made on our liberty.

(††) In regard to actions which are bad and sinful, he not only does not hinder them—he not only withholds restraining grace—he not only allows them to be performed, but he also takes care that motives be presented which are efficacious in persuading to the commission of evil. He does not indeed immediately furnish these motives and as in good actions directly apply them to the mind, for he does not tempt any man; but he takes care, as we have said, that this be done by Satan and by our own evil desires,—*first*, by observing what objects have power to excite in man the desire and the purpose to sin; and *secondly*, by arranging the circumstances of time and place. He may thus permit to be presented to us objects fitted to excite us to evil without being the efficient cause of sin. For

(.) Sin is not materially connected with these objects; because man is and continues free in the actions which he performs.

(..) God does not present these objects with the end and design that man may sin, but in order rather that he may have an opportunity for the exercise of virtue.

(∴) There are always presented to him motives of an opposite kind deterring him from sin—such as conscience, the divine law, and its sanction. It is in this sense that wicked actions are ascribed to

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God. He is represented, for instance, as having bidden Shimei curse David, 2 Sam. xvi. 11—not that he really told Shimei to do so or inwardly moved him to commit such an offence, but that he presented David in a condition in which Shimei already disposed to curse could do so with impunity. Thus also he is said to have moved David to number the people, 2 Sam. xxiv. 1 ; while in another place this is ascribed to Satan, 1 Chron. xxi. 1. It is ascribed to God because he placed David in circumstances which tended to excite his ambition and pride. He is said also to have sold Joseph or to have sent him into Egypt, meaning by this nothing more than that he had arranged all the circumstances which led Joseph's brethren to perpetrate such a deed. In this way several passages and expressions of Scripture are capable of being consistently explained.

Although God therefore provide that motives to sin be furnished, yet as he does not cause man to sin, as he does not infringe upon his liberty or by any operation of his own excite him to commit sin, he cannot be chargeable with his sin. Still there remains the difficulty as to the manner of the divine influence in this matter.

2. In regard to the progress and termination of our free actions the providence of God is sufficiently clear. For he either allows or hinders them, he appoints their time and manner, and directs them to ends fitted to manifest his own glory and agreeable to the different conditions in which his creatures are placed.

Our *practical* treatise on the providence of God has for its object the demonstration that his perfections in governing the world are entire. We shall accordingly vindicate his providence from the objections of those who say that his government of the world is opposed to his justice, holiness, goodness, and wisdom.

I. God is certainly infinitely just and the righteous judge of the world. He must therefore do what is right. But how, it may be asked, can his justice be vindicated, when there are so many things which seem to be directly opposed to it? There is much injustice, we are told, in the world, and men inflict upon each other a variety of wrongs? This we admit is true, but no inference can be drawn from it against the justice of God. For

(.) Although he is the governor of the universe he is not the efficient and creating cause of those unjust actions which man himself in consequence of his own depravity performs. God permits, governs, and directs them, but he does not efficiently produce them.

(..) He cannot as the governor of all things be accused of injustice, because he is the dispenser of all the blessings which men possess,

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and which in the exercise of his own authority and without any reflection upon his justice he may bestow upon some and withhold from others. Thus he could allow the Israelites without any charge of injustice to take away the property of the Egyptians, Exod. xii. 35, 36. He may also permit spoliations of a similar kind to be made, while the guilt of them is chargeable only upon men themselves.

(∴) There is no injustice, moreover, in such government, because God by permitting these wrongs punishes some and corrects and tries others. He has uniformly some righteous end in view.

Why, it is further objected, does he not, as his justice seems to demand, immediately punish the wicked ?

(.) His justice we reply does not require the immediate infliction of punishment, but the infliction of it in his own time. It is sufficient if it be inflicted, no matter when. Among men it does not always immediately follow the commission of crime. Yet God has stronger reasons for delay. For it is not only not necessary that he act in this matter as men do, who inflict speedy punishment because they have not the offender always in their power or the opportunity at all times of punishing him, or who often punish under the influence of passion, but he punishes at the most seasonable time when his hand may be seen and his justice in punishing may most conspicuously appear.

(..) But God is a righteous judge, as he shews himself to be in governing the world. Now in delaying to punish a large measure of praise frequently accrues to him. He is also an example to men in the attribute of long-suffering and in its exercise should be imitated by them, in their laying a restraint upon their angry feelings and in their not immediately inflicting punishment upon those who offend or injure them, Matt. v. 43–48. The circumstance therefore of sin's not being instantly followed with punishment does not prove that God is not the righteous ruler of the universe.

It is objected again that the wicked are not punished in this life at all. To this objection we reply

(.) Suppose it were the case, it would be no reflection upon the justice of God; because, as we have seen, he is long-suffering, and because he will manifest and vindicate his justice when he sees that the proper time has come for doing so.

(..) We positively deny that none of the wicked are punished in this life in one way or other, although the punishment may not be perceptible by us. Assuredly they are punished when they feel the want of the divine favour and the injury done to their reputation and

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when they writhe under the gnawings and tortures of a guilty conscience. There is not a sinner, we say, who does not in the present world experience something of this kind that opposes the indulgence of his passions. But if we sometimes do not see the wicked punished by outward calamities, this arises from the fact that God often employs them as instruments to punish others, as he has done in the case of Nebuchadnezzar and other tyrants and devastators of kingdoms.

Another objection is that the wicked are not punished here according to their deserts. We reply that this life is a school of probation, and that judgment will come in God's own time. The present is not designed nor fitted for that, for God does not now give to every man according to his work. He will do so hereafter in his own time. He is the governor of the world not absolutely but relatively to the final judgment when he will render to all according to their deeds, Rom. ii. 6.

We are told moreover that the ungodly enjoy much earthly prosperity and honour.

(.) This we admit is true, but these are blessings not in reality but only in appearance. They are not enjoyed along with a good conscience and with the favour and fellowship of God, in which man's highest happiness consists, and do not tend to a beneficial result.

(..) Their enjoyment of these things is owing to the long-suffering of God, who would thus excite and lead them to repentance (Rom. ii. 4), and who thus manifests his singular goodness in willing not the death but the life of the sinner.

(∴) They enjoy these blessings either on account of the virtues of those who have gone before them, whose posterity God, in the exercise of his goodness, thus blesses, or on account of their own services to the community of which they form a part or to the church. For they may sometimes confer favours on the church or the state—favours which God who is a very bountiful rewarder never allows to pass without some mark of his approbation.

Once more, it is objected that God allows the righteous to struggle in the present life with poverty and injustice and misfortune.

This is true but it is quite consistent with the justice of God; for

(.) The righteous are not altogether free from sin, and therefore deserve such correction at the hand of God.

(..) The evils which happen to them result in good. They are in their nature and design corrective. They are sent to prove and amend them, and furnish opportunity for the exercise of their virtues.

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(∴) They are not strictly and properly evils, because they proceed from God who stands to them in the relation of a kind and merciful father, they are the results of the favour which he entertains for them and are accompanied with the greatest good. Let it be borne in mind, moreover, that, although they are sent by him, we have no reason to complain of his justice; because he is sovereign lord of all, and may dispose of his blessings by giving them to some and denying them to others, as seems good to himself.

Let us now consider the *holiness* of God, which certainly is conspicuously seen in his government of the world. If he be its ruler, then moral evil seems to be inconsistent with this attribute, since he is of purer eyes than to look upon sin.

It is objected accordingly that it is contrary to his holiness that there are so many sinners and so much sin in the world. We reply,

(.) The existence of sin would be directly opposed to the holiness of God if he were its author and efficient cause. But this we have already disproved. We have shewn that he only permits evil.

(..) As he has sufficient and wise reasons for allowing sin to exist in the world, so likewise he manifests his holiness in the midst of it in a variety of ways. He does so by the conscience which he has implanted in every man's breast, by the holy and righteous laws which he has enjoined, and by the judgments which he inflicts upon sinners when his own glory and the welfare of men require them. The judgments for instance which befel the old world, Sodom, Gomorrah, Babylon, and Jerusalem, these and others of as singular a kind were so many manifestations and proofs of the holiness and vindicatory justice of God, and were designed to strike terror into the hearts of sinners in all future times. And as from these all may come to the conclusion that God is holy, so likewise should they bear in mind what sinners deserve and what would be their portion were he not kind and long-suffering. He has moreover given a signal demonstration of this attribute to all who have heard of Christ, in whom as standing in the place of sinners he has vindicated both his holiness and his justice.

It seems to be contrary to the *goodness* of God that physical evil should exist in the world, and that there should be so great an inequality in the condition of men—that some should be servants and others masters—that some should be rich and others poor.

We reply, *generally*, that this difficulty arises both from the mistaken opinion which we entertain regarding physical good and evil, and from the erroneous judgment we form concerning the goodness

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of God which is to be seen so clearly in his providence and government of the world.

We say that we form a mistaken opinion of physical good and evil when we judge of them only according to their outward appearance, at the suggestion of our own senses, and in conformity to our own opinions. These are all false principles by which our judgment in this matter should not be guided. We should consider rather the connexion in which physical evil stands to what is truly and supremely good, the relation which both physical good and evil have to the final result, and the service which physical evil renders to the world.

Hence the following rules must be observed,

(.) That is to be regarded as good or evil which tends to a good or evil end. For instance that is evil which has no connexion with the chief good and which does not lead to it. That which conducts to life and salvation, although it be bitter and painful, cannot be considered as evil; while that which produces death must be viewed as such, although it may appear to us pleasant in the extreme. This is easily understood. No man calls medicine, however nauseous, evil, inasmuch as it tends to restore to the enjoyment of health; and on the other hand the most exquisite sensual pleasures and the most luxurious fare, tending as they do to injure the bodily constitution and to endanger life itself, are regarded as evil whatever delight may be felt in the enjoyment of them. Now if the evils which happen to man here be connected with eternal life, no matter with what inconvenience or discomfort or pain they may be attended, they cannot properly be called evils. And in like manner the good things of the world, whatever temporary pleasure they may give, yet, if they contribute to produce death, must be pronounced to be evils.

(..) We must consider the service which physical evil renders to the world. The world is in a fallen state, and therefore those things cannot be regarded as evils which tend to reduce it into order. When their design is to effect this object, just as corrections are administered in a school for the general good, it is plain that they are not opposed to the goodness of God, who has in view, in permitting such evils, the welfare of all his creatures.

(∴) We must attend also to the relation which things in appearance physically good and evil have to those that are so in the highest sense. That which is connected with the chief good cannot be considered as evil, however painful it may be; for it does not separate us from the favour and friendship of God, Rom. viii. 38, 39. Nay

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the evils which befal us are often accompanied with a sense of his favour, and therefore are not properly speaking to be accounted as such. And if this be the case then neither is any good, however agreeable, however useful in external appearance, to be considered as really good, if it separate us from God, if it be not attended with the enjoyment of his fellowship and with the sense of his favour and love.

We said that the objection we are now considering arises also from forming an erroneous judgment regarding the goodness of God as manifested in the government of the world—from supposing, that is to say, that it must exclude every kind of evil, and admit only what is agreeable and happy. This we say is an erroneous judgment, because it is not formed from a consideration of the state of the world and of the design which providence has in view. The world is in a fallen condition, and men are sinners. The present life besides will be succeeded by another, and man is now in a state of preparation for a future world—in a state of trial. This is not the place of reward—this is not the time for judgment. We are under a dispensation of long-suffering. God will hereafter render to every man according to his deeds. We are now preparing for a future state either of happiness or of misery—we are now on our trial for the life to come. In this world we must run and fight, in the next we shall obtain the crown.

As this is the light in which the world and the present life should be regarded, it is plain that the goodness of God cannot be absolute but restricted. He treats man here, as if he were in school, in a state of preparation, trial, and exercise. Hence it follows

(.) That physical evils are not excluded. For if there were no such evils, the view which we have taken of the world would be completely destroyed, it would be a state not of preparation but of reward, it would be the scene not of conflict but of triumph, and men might desire to remain in it for ever.

(..) That all things in the world are not evil—that all good is not excluded. For in this case it would not be a school of discipline, but a prison house—a state of punishment and not of preparation. It would not be an object of desire to man, nay it would be utterly insupportable, if all things were evil. God, therefore, governs the world in such a way that man longs neither to leave it nor to remain longer in it when he is called away. There must be accordingly a mixture of good and evil.

(∴) That, as the governor of the world is infinitely good, we may conclude that there must be in it, fallen though it be, more good than

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evil. For he is long-suffering and calls men to repentance. Experience shows that generally good preponderates over evil, and if individuals consult their own condition and form their judgment from it, they will find that this holds true in regard to them. The great majority of men however are very unfit judges in such a matter as this, because they frequently lose sight of the blessings which they have received, while they have a keener feeling of what is unfavourable in their condition. But if they would form a correct judgment, they must consider life as a whole, and by doing so they will find that they have received from God more good than evil. What is thus true of individuals is also true of the world generally and of the kingdoms, states, and communities of which it is composed.

(::) That, as God is holy as well as good, there is a probability that the government of the world is conducted in such a way that some distinction is made between the righteous and the wicked in their enjoyment of what is good and evil. This distinction refers to possession as well as enjoyment, not uniformly indeed in outward appearance but only according to the right view of the case. For the righteous, whatever their condition and circumstances in this life may be, enjoy a far larger measure of delight and tranquillity than the wicked. The latter cannot rest, and though their cause for a season triumph, yet how are they at length overwhelmed! The righteous shall inherit the earth—they cannot always remain under the curse, and although for a time they may be in obscurity, yet their cause shall be vindicated. God will bring forth their righteousness as the light and their judgment as the noon-day.

But we reply *in particular*, in regard to the evils that exist in the world

(.) That they are so not absolutely but relatively to our own opinion and imagination, and therefore that what men often regard as evils should in reality be ranked among things that are good. Experience teaches us how erroneously men usually judge in this matter. He who does not receive such a favour as he desires—he who has not such abundance of wealth as meets his wishes—he who does not excel others in station—he who sometimes must yield to them and who cannot satisfy the cravings of ambition—these individuals are strangers to pleasure, deem themselves unfortunate, and consequently are tormented. And what is the cause of this but just the perverse judgment by which they regard as good what is in reality evil?

(..) That the evils which man experiences in this life are for the most part to be imputed to himself, and are the result of natural laws.

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What evil consequences flow from drunkenness and lust—what a train of miseries follow in the footsteps of ambition! And to whom is this to be ascribed but to man himself whose heart is fired with ambition and inflamed by every evil desire?

But it is asked why there are so many different conditions in the world. One is rich and another plunged in poverty; one is strong and another weak, one is eminent in rank and another grovels in obscurity. But this diversity is not opposed to the goodness of God,

(.) Because it is absolutely necessary to keep the world in order. For if all were equally rich and powerful, what a scene would ensue! How could one help another? All subordination would be at an end.

(..) Because there is no condition in life in which we may not become happy. Whether we be rich or poor, masters or servants, illustrious or obscure, king or subjects, if we only cultivate virtue we have the origin, spring and foundation of all good of all happiness. The way to eternal life in every condition lies open before us, and real happiness may be acquired and enjoyed by all. If poverty could exclude a man from it, then unquestionably poverty might be regarded as a grievous calamity. If abundance of earthly comforts and any honour which the world can confer should interfere with the enjoyment of this happiness, then they too might be ranked among evils. But there is no condition in this world in which we may not enjoy the favour of God, in which we may not give our attention to the things that pertain to everlasting life. Nay a condition of wretchedness and obscurity is generally more favourable for this than one of wealth and honour, especially in the present constitution of things. Let us not therefore complain of the providence of God as if it were badly conducted, but let us rather labour that, by the right exercise of virtue in the condition in which his goodness has placed us, we may find out the way to happiness.

It remains that we advert for a little to the *wisdom* of God. This perfection is seen in his government of the world.

(*a.*) In the dependence which our free actions have upon him in respect of their origin, and in their being so connected with our reason and liberty that, while they are under his control and direction, we at the same time are free in performing them. This certainly requires much wisdom on the part of God, wisdom infinitely exalted above our conceptions.

(*b.*) In selecting suitable ends in which all things terminate, whether these be good or evil, so that every one receives what is agreeable to his condition.

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(*c.*) In connecting with these ends suitable means. Such a connexion argues infinite wisdom on the part of the Being who institutes it and frequently excites the admiration of all; *a posteriori* we mean *i. e.* when the results of the connexion are observed, because *a priori* we are entirely ignorant of it. And hence it is that we judge too rashly and so charge God with folly. If for instance we peruse the history of Joseph or David, we cannot but wonder at the sad vicissitudes that befel them if we look not beyond the individuals themselves, but we must be struck with admiration if we look to the end of these vicissitudes and to the harmony of the means that led to it.*

(*d.*) In the various events that happen to kingdoms and states, to monarchs and other men.

(*e.*) In selecting such seasons for granting deliverance, inflicting punishment, and bestowing rewards, as are most suitable to his own glory and to men themselves. In relation, moreover, to the latter, his wisdom is manifested in disappointing their expectations and in completely destroying their fears in respect both of good and evil, in defeating the wisdom of those who put confidence in themselves, and in producing and rewarding humility. Thus God usually ordains, that where hope seemed certain the thing hoped for is not attained, but that where matters seemed desperate, by and by a far different

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* In contemplating the circumstances of his own history and what is happening in the world, the believer may at times be perplexed and bewildered and tempted it may be to call in question the wisdom of God. He cannot discern the reason of each separate event nor the mutual relation and dependence of the whole—how his peculiar trials are to issue in his advantage, or how darkness and trouble and persecution will conduce to the welfare, increase, and stability of the church. And yet he is assured that, however isolated and independent of each other these events may seem to be, they nevertheless form part of a perfect scheme and under the direction of infinite wisdom will combine to bring about the very end for which they were ordained. In this matter he is just like an individual surveying in wonder a complicated piece of machinery. It is set in motion by an unseen power and presently all is noise and apparent confusion. He sees various wheels moving according to their magnitude with greater or less rapidity, and some of them in a direction contrary to that of others. He is unable to perceive the design of each separate movement, the mutual relationship of the different parts of the mechanism. And yet all is order and harmony. He who constructed the machine understands all its various and complex motions, and adjusted its several parts so as to bring about a certain result. In like manner we may be in the dark regarding the tendency of a particular event in our own individual history or in the history of the world. The events that happen may be apparently contradictory and we may be ready to give way to doubt as to their ultimate design. And yet "all chance" is just "direction which we cannot see—all discord harmony not understood." He who knows all things has ordained and adjusted them with the view of accomplishing a certain object—even his own glory and the best interests of his people. He has not condescended to reveal and explain their mutual dependence and bearing, but he has assured us that, however unlikely they may appear as means, that object will most certainly be attained.

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scene presents itself, and matters turn out contrary to all expectation. When men walk proudly, they are soon brought low, that God alone may be exalted, Is. ii. 11 ; while on the other hand he lifts up those who are bowed down to the earth and who cannot raise themselves, in order that his wisdom may be acknowledged and praised by all.

CHAPTER XXVI.

THE COVENANT OF WORKS.

PARADISE—TREE OF LIFE, WHY SO CALLED—TREE OF KNOWLEDGE OF GOOD AND EVIL—REASON OF THE NAME—THE STATE IN WHICH MAN WAS CREATED—THE MORAL LAW—LOVE TO GOD AND TO HIS NEIGHBOUR—THE SANCTION BY WHICH THIS LAW IS ENFORCED—THE STATE IN WHICH MAN WAS PLACED—THE PROHIBITION, ITS MEANING AND DESIGN.

We now come to treat particularly of divine providence, as it relates to man in the various conditions in which he has been placed. These conditions are three

I. His innocence.
II. His fall.
III. His recovery.

I. In the first of these the providence of God was exercised in regard both to man's natural and moral state, and hence it may be viewed in a twofold aspect corresponding to this division.

God's natural providence consisted in his placing man in Paradise, a garden of exquisite beauty, and richly stored with all that could minister to his comfort and happiness, and in which stood conspicuous two trees, *the tree of life,* and *the tree of knowledge of good and evil.* This garden is called Eden, from the delicacies, as the Hebrew word indicates, with which it abounded, and Paradise also, a Persian word signifying an enclosed piece of ground, Gen ii. 8.

The knowledge of Paradise includes two things

1. Its situation, and
2. The cultivation of its garden.

1. We have spoken of the situation of this place in our Ecclesiastical History,* where we have shown that in all probability it lay below

* Institutiones Historiæ Ecclesiæ, vol. i. pp. 45, 46.

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Babylon in a tract of country where there was a confluence of four rivers.

In speaking of the cultivation of the garden in which there was such an abundance of delights, the two trees already mentioned demand especial consideration both as to their names and as to their number and quality.

In regard to the tree of life in the midst of the garden, why, it has been asked, was it so called? We reply (*a.*) Not because it was alive in opposition to one that was dead; for, in this respect, it was precisely like those by which it was surrounded; nor because it was always green and flourishing and yielded its fruit every month, in the same sense as we call water living which flows in a continual current. It was not simply a living tree but the tree of life—a name which denotes that it was in some way or other the cause of life. It must, therefore, have had something peculiar on account of which it received this name above the rest. (*b.*) Neither is it enough to say that it was a type or symbol, or a sacramental sign of eternal life and of Christ by whom that life was procured, for, in this case, it must have had some peculiar property for which it was singled out in preference to the others, and which the others had not. (*c.*) Nothing, therefore, remains, but that we consider the name given to it as meaning that it did possess a certain power, communicated to it by God, of preserving, prolonging, and gladdening the life of man on earth. This, we say, its name seems to imply, and we know no other reason that can be assigned for it. If this be admitted, we must remark concerning the nature of this tree, that it was extraordinary, and that in itself or in the fruit which it bore there resided a power to produce the effects to which we have just referred.

And hence we find the reason why, when man, after the fall, was driven forth from Paradise, he was debarred access to this tree,—lest, namely, he should put forth his hand and take of the tree of life and eat and live for ever, Gen. iii. 22. We may conclude from this that God had established a connexion between the eating of its fruit and eternal life, and had ordained that, when man by the fall should forfeit that life, he should also be precluded from this tree.

Allusion is made to this tree in other parts of Scripture. See Ezek. xlvii. 12; Rev. xxii. 2; where it is represented as planted on each side of the river, and the leaves of it are said to be for the healing of the nations. But let no one suppose or maintain that, because man in his state of innocence was exempt from disease and death, he needed no means of this kind to keep him alive; because the ques-

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tion still remains as to the way in which it would have preserved him in being, whether mediately or immediately. In his unfallen condition Adam unquestionably required to eat and drink in order to support life. This cannot be denied. Why, therefore, may it not also be affirmed that means of this kind were necessary to preserve his immortality, just as food and drink were to support his body?

Whether this was a solitary tree or whether there were more of the same kind is a question of very little importance and one which we are not in circumstances to decide. It is probable however that instead of there being only one there were several of the same kind, that God produced the species not a single tree. Ezekiel, in the passage already quoted, tells us that the trees were planted on both banks of the river.

It is uncertain to what species this tree belonged. Some, as Campegius Vitringa, suppose it to have been the balsam. This however is mere conjecture. The opinion rests on no firm foundation. The probability is that it was a tree characterised by some peculiar property and that it afterwards perished.

The *tree of knowledge of good and evil* was so called, not because it was endued with reason—an opinion unworthy of refutation; nor because it had any natural power to enlarge man's understanding or to direct and perfect his judgment. It is not easy to see how it could produce such effects, inasmuch as the fruit of a tree, being matter, cannot act upon spirit, or why God wished to prevent man from eating it, because he is good and desires the perfect happiness of man. But neither does it appear that Satan gave the tree this name with the view of persuading man that it did possess such a virtue. It had this name before the fall, for Satan drew from it an argument for his temptation—*i. e.* he urged man to eat of the tree, because, as the name given to it by God indicated, it was fit to produce the specified effect, Gen. iii. 5. Nor is it probable that it was so called because Satan supposed that it was fitted to make man perfect in knowledge, or because man, by eating its fruit, would know by sad experience the difference between natural and moral good and evil. The word *know* is not so used. It is employed indeed in the sense of to *understand*, but to know good and evil signifies wisdom and prudence, by which an individual has a correct knowledge of good and evil and at the same time knows how to choose between the two. Thus infants are said to have "no knowledge between good and evil," Deut. i. 39. David is said, "as an angel of God,

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to discern good and bad," 2 Sam. xiv. 17; and the apostle (Heb. v. 14) speaks of those "who by reason of use have their senses exercised to discern both good and evil."

The only reason then why it was so called seems to us to be that it was the cause of wisdom and prudence. Just as the tree of life owed its name to the circumstance of its having been created with power to preserve Adam's life, so this tree received its peculiar designation on account of its being the cause of wisdom. But what kind of cause was this? Not physical but moral; and a cause of the latter kind is as much a cause as one of the former. Now it was a cause of this description inasmuch as it was fitted (*a*) to teach man wisdom, to confirm him in it, and to afford constant room for its exercise, and (*b*) to put his wisdom and prudence or rather his constancy to the test, because he was bound to exemplify these by abstaining from eating its fruit.

But how could it do this? Not of itself but by the prohibition which was given regarding it and in virtue of which the tree may be regarded as the moral means of exercising, proving, and perfecting man's wisdom. For the prohibition rendered it an act of wisdom in him to be on his guard against touching the fruit of the tree—it taught him also moral truths of vast importance relating to wisdom; and continually exercised his wisdom as long as he abstained from the fruit which it forbade him to eat.

In regard to the quality and quantity of this tree we have no certain information. All that has been said on these points is entirely without foundation. Some would have us believe that it produced apples of a golden or orange hue; others, that it was a fig tree, from the circumstance of man's covering his nakedness after the fall with its leaves. Some affirm one thing; others another; but nothing can be determined. Let us therefore proceed to a more profitable topic.

In speaking of the providence of God towards man, we presuppose the condition in which he was *created* and the condition in which he was *placed* to be the object of that providence. For, although these are wont to be confounded, they must nevertheless be carefully distinguished. The condition in which he was created is one thing: that in which he was placed by providence is another. The providence of God, therefore, has to do with the state in which he was created, the state, namely, of innocence. But the state which providence added to this was that in which a prohibition was given, inasmuch as God forbade him, under pain of death, to eat of the tree of knowledge of good and evil.

To make our treatise complete we shall consider

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I. The *natural* state or the state in which man was created and
II. The *accidental* state or the state in which God placed him.

I. The natural state or that in which man was created we have already considered as consisting in his bearing the image of God. But we now view it as consisting in his subjection to a law which he was created and disposed to obey. This was the moral law—the law that enjoined love to God and love to our neighbour—a law which conscience teaches is written on his heart (Rom. ii. 15) and which all the posterity of Adam still have within them. There can be no doubt, therefore, that Adam, at his creation, had this law written on his heart and put within his mind; for it flowed from the image of God in which he was formed and from the condition of innocence in which he was placed

This law is a brief compendium of all virtue and piety—the sum of all the duties which we owe to God and to one another—the principle from which all duties ought to spring. Scripture represents it in this light—as that, namely, on which "hang all the law and the prophets," Matt. xxii. 40; Rom. xiii. 8, 9. Let us briefly examine both.

(*a.*) The love of God and
(*b.*) The love of our neighbour.

(*a.*) The former has God for its object—not simply, as must be carefully observed, a certain idea of God which we form for ourselves, but God considered in the relations in which he stands to us—the relation, namely, of a Being infinitely glorious and perfect and distinct from all created things;—the relation of Lord by right of creation, from whom we derive our being, on whom we continually depend, and to whom we owe all;—and the relation of the chief good, inasmuch as he is an all-sufficient Being whose favour and fellowship constitute our highest happiness. These are the relations in which he stands to us, and in these relations he must be loved by us.

What then does this love of God mean? It is not merely, we reply, a feeling which an individual entertains for some idea of God which he has formed in his own mind. But it is a sincere desire towards God as the Lord of glory and as the supreme good—a desire which leads us to conduct ourselves suitably to the relations in which he stands to us, that is, to love him with our whole heart, as glorious in himself and as the source of all our happiness. From this it is evident (1.) That we love the perfections of God when we ascribe to him willingly and with our whole heart every attribute of excellence. (2.) That we love him as a glorious Being, when we desire to be

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conformed to his perfections. He is omniscient, omnipresent, and omnipotent, and therefore we wish to act toward him as such by adoring and fearing him. (3.) That we love him when we have a real desire to reflect his image and in our feelings and actions to imitate his perfections. And, therefore, when we wish to be holy, and true, and just, and good as he is, this is to love him as he is in himself. Hence it is plain that those are far from loving and glorifying him who seem to be actuated only by some zeal for his glory. (4.) That we ought to love God as our supreme Lord. Now we do so when we love his will. Affection for him, therefore, implies a desire on our part to subject ourselves to his will which guides and governs all; and hence to love him and to keep his commandments are one and the same thing, and are often used the one for the other. This also flows from the nature of God. For he who loves any one is willing and anxious to please him—to afford him any gratification and to avoid every thing that is opposed to his will; and, therefore, he who cherishes love towards God will be led to follow a similar course of conduct. (5.) That we ought to love God as our chief good; that is, we should have an ardent longing after communion with him. Love always desires to be united to its object, and in this view to love God is to seek him in preference to every other object and to desire his fellowship and favour as our greatest happiness.

An opinion may be easily formed regarding the *manner* and *degree* of this love. These must be such as God and the relations in which he stands to us require. He is infinitely glorious—he is possessed of sovereign authority—and he is the chief good of his creatures; and, therefore, he must be magnified, worshipped, reverenced, and sought after above all things, even, as Scripture says, with all our heart and soul and might, Deut. vi. 5. To love God supremely, therefore, is to love him, *with all our heart*, that is, with a right sense and understanding of him and of his perfections, of his will and of his fellowship; for the heart, as distinguished from the soul, means that power of the mind by which we understand and judge—*with all our soul*, that is, with all our affection and desire—sincerely, therefore, and fervently, subordinating and conforming to this all other desires, so that we long after God above all things, whether these things lead to him or may consist with our love to him;—*with all our might*, that is, not only with all our strength and all our powers, but in particular with that in which we excel, that which is especially ours. For every man has his particular gifts or endowments in which he is superior to others. One possesses more

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strength, more wisdom, more learning, or more eloquence than another. Some possess one qualification in an eminent degree, and others another, and these must be devoted to the advancement of the divine glory and to the doing of the divine will.

(*b.*) The *love of our neighbour* is comprehended in this other law, "thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself." And who is our neighbour? Every human being, we reply, is bound to us by some tie of relationship. This relationship is various, being in some cases more intimate and in others more loosely formed and more common in the interests which it involves. There is, for instance, a relationship arising from our being partakers of a common nature, close and familiar in its character; a relationship formed by cherishing the same faith and by observing the same religious ceremonies; a relationship by blood and others by which men are bound to each other. Now every man, in respect of the nature he wears, is our neighbour. The law itself shows this, "thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself." He is, therefore, another *I*, because he is a partaker of the same nature as myself, and we are commanded to love all, even our enemies themselves, when we consider them as men.

What then is it to love our neighbour? We say that it is to cherish towards him not a natural brute affection, but a most sincere desire to promote his happiness, and therefore not only not to lessen it by depriving him of what is rightfully his, but to increase it and to bestow upon him whatever is fitted to advance it.

But in what *degree* is our neighbour to be loved? Scripture says *as ourselves*, Lev. xix. 18; Matt. xxii. 39; Rom. xiii. 9. Reason also confirms Scripture and proves that we should do so. But what does the expression *as ourselves* mean? Is not a man nearest to himself? Unquestionably; and, on this very account, he is proposed as the standard and rule of the love which he should cherish for his neighbour; he ought to consider his neighbour as himself and love him, therefore, as himself; he should love him as he would love himself if placed in the same situation, and as he would wish himself in that situation to be loved by another. For example, I consider my neighbour as a beggar, and I put myself in his place; I then think what I would wish to be done to me, if his condition were mine; and I ought, therefore, to act towards him in the way in which I would have him act towards me, if our situation and circumstances were changed. Our Lord has thus explained it in his own words, "Therefore, all things whatsoever ye would that men should do unto you, do ye even so to them," Matt. vii. 12. This is

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the law of nature, the principle of all virtue and of the duties which we owe to God and to our neighbour, between which there exists so very close a connexion.

The *sanction* of the law which enjoins love to God and to our neighbour consists of a *promise* made to those who keep it, and of a *threatening* denounced against those who break it.

In regard to the *promise*, we may say, in a word, that it related to the perfection of the natural state, perfection to be attained in the present world or in the next—a perfection which, as is evident, man had not, but which was merely promised. But let us explain these things in order.

We said that the promise related to the perfection of the natural condition in which man in innocence was placed. In the description which we have already given of this state, we presupposed that it admitted of this perfection. And that it did so is very plain, (1.) Because the understanding of man was susceptible of enlargement, his fellowship with God admitted of greater intimacy, and the crown that was put upon his head, of a higher degree of glory. (2.) Because his perseverance in that state might have been made sure; for he was yet fallible, and did not enjoy all which he was capable of enjoying. The hope of attaining perfection, however, was held out to him. For (†) God was presented to him as a Being supremely good, as the rewarder, therefore, of those who seek him, and as able to bestow upon man all the happiness he is capable of receiving and enjoying: for this the goodness of God requires, if there be no obstacle in the way. (††) He was placed in a state of probation (the sign of which was the prohibition, of which we shall speak immediately), and, therefore, in a state of preparation for that perfect condition which he would attain if he gave sufficient proof of his constancy.

Although there are some who say that man would have continued for ever in Paradise if he had not fallen; and although they represent his perfection as consisting not in the possession of temporal things merely, but in the enjoyment of closest fellowship with God, a fellowship which may exist on earth as well as in heaven or wherever man may be placed, yet we think that his perfection was to be attained in heaven and not in Paradise.

(1.) Because the keeping of the law is elsewhere in Scripture connected with eternal life, Rom. ii. 7. Under the Gospel also, eternal life is held forth to us as to be enjoyed in heaven. Nor is it probable that man in his fallen state will be perfected in any other place than he would have been in his state of innocence, especially as he is said

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to be restored by Christ to the condition from which he fell. The scene of his perfection, therefore, is the same both in his fallen and unfallen condition. (2.) Because the life which man leads here and which Adam also as a being composed of body and of soul led in Paradise is in no way consistent with the eternal state, otherwise it must be held that in that state we will eat, drink, labour, and perform other ordinary natural functions. But such a life as this which implies the discharge of these functions has in it something unsuitable even in Paradise, and is, therefore, still more incongruous to an eternal state of existence, in which, as far as we can see, there will be no such thing. Hence (3.) We conclude that man must have undergone some change; for with the body which he had he could not have entered the heavenly state. This change, however, is widely different from that which we call temporal death, and which man, in his fallen state, is destined to undergo. For death is the consequence and the punishment of sin, and was threatened by God, if man violated his law, when He said "thou shalt surely die." But what that change would have been we are unable to explain. Those, however, who shall be alive at the close of time are said not to die, but to be translated to heaven, 1 Thess. iv. 17. This was the promise given to our first parent in Paradise in his state of innocence. Whether the promise was made explicitly or by implication is a question which we can scarcely determine. Moses does not say that it was expressly given. Nor was a promise of such a kind necessary; because man was in a state of happiness, and might have known that, if he continued in obedience to God, that happiness would last for ever. (4.) An express promise is given for the purpose of urging man more earnestly to the pursuit of virtue and of happiness, and of delivering him from the fear of misery. But in his state of innocence he required no such motive, for in that state his happiness was unbroken. In his fallen state, however, he must be excited by promises, as he dares not entertain the expectation of any blessings from God. In his state of innocence he was deterred from sin, only by attending to the threatening; because he was then in the actual enjoyment of good, and nothing else than the threatening, therefore, was necessary, lest that good should be lost. Moses also makes mention only of a threatening not of a promise.

He had, however, an implied promise, inasmuch as he might have attained the knowledge of it by listening to his own conscience. As there could be no reason drawn from the goodness of God why he should fall from the state in which he was created,

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he might have assured himself of continuing in it. The tree of life also was a sign of this promise. And yet we cannot tell what knowledge he had of the state of perfection, much less where it was to be enjoyed—in Paradise or in heaven. Nor had he any need of this knowledge. It was sufficient for him to know that the state of happiness would continue; the question as to its precise locality he might have safely left to God himself.

A threatening, it will easily be seen from what has been said, is directly contrary to a promise. As the perfection of the natural state and of the happiness enjoyed in it was connected with the promise, if he obeyed the law, so the threatening must imply the loss of that state, and misery as opposed to happiness, which misery we now call eternal death. But we know not what idea he could have formed of this latter state; for although while he was in the enjoyment of happiness he might have formed some notion of the absence or want of it, he could form no notion of a state directly contrary, because none can know this but by experience.

Let us now pass

II. To the consideration of divine providence, as exercised towards man in the state in which he was placed (status accidentalis). Of this state we have no certain information except what is supplied by Moses, who informs us that God gave man a certain prohibition, sanctioned by an express threatening in these words, "In the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die," Gen. ii. 17. We must, therefore, explain (1.) the prohibition, (2.) the threatening and the promise by which the prohibition was sanctioned.

(1.) The prohibition regarded the tree of knowledge of good and evil, and comprehended abstaining, on the part of man, from eating the fruit of that tree. Of this prohibition let us shew (*a.*) The meaning and (*b.*) The design.

(*a.*) The *meaning* of the prohibition is not involved in difficulty. God forbade man to eat of the fruit of the tree of knowledge of good and evil. Eve indeed suggested a certain difficulty when mentioning it at the time of the temptation. She said to Satan that God had forbidden them to touch the tree, Gen. iii. 3. But this difficulty, to which many in former times clung, and about which all are not yet agreed, is easily removed if we consider

(.) That Eve meant not simply the touching of the tree, but the touching of it with the desire or design of taking of its fruit.

(..) That the expression "touch not" is a proverbial one and is equivalent to abstaining from an object or regarding it as polluted;

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just as a man infected with the leprosy was accustomed to say "touch me not" in order that he might prevent men from coming into contact with him. The phrase "touch not" therefore is the same as "take not of the fruit," look upon it as something unclean from which you must abstain. But this is a point of very little importance.

(*b.*) The *design* of the prohibition was that man should carefully abstain from taking of the fruit of the tree, for by doing so he would involve himself in ruin, not because the fruit was in its own nature hurtful, but because in virtue of the prohibition the eating of it and of it alone would be followed by destruction. The prohibition, however, served other important purposes. And what were these? God prohibited the eating of the fruit of this tree

(.) *That man might be constantly reminded of the natural law.* This prohibition accordingly was a sign of that law, because it was fitted continually to teach him true wisdom and prudence. For it taught him that God was his chief good and that therefore he ought not to live to himself and according to his own pleasure, but in conformity to the law and will of God, inasmuch as he derives his being from him and depends upon him—that, as God is the chief good, he must subordinate all his happiness and delight to this prohibition, for it was the sign of his subjection. And as this tree was agreeable and pleasant, he was taught by the prohibition to seek all his enjoyment in God as his supreme good.

(..) *That man might be deterred from violating the natural law.* God created him with freedom of will and with the design that he might enjoy permanent happiness. He wished therefore in every way to confirm him in his state of innocence that he might attain this end and not abuse the liberty with which as a rational creature God had endued him. This was the purpose served by the tree of life which brought this happiness and perfection before his notice. But God wished also to place before his eyes the evil consequences which would follow the violation of the natural law, and for this end he issued the prohibition;—not that man might be excited and tempted to sin,—far from it,—but that he might be put upon his guard against violating the law. For this reason then he forewarned him of the evil—that he might not forfeit his happiness which he would do if he transgressed the law.

(∴) *That man's perseverance in the love of God and of his neighbour might be put to the test.* God wished to make trial of this. And the prohibition was singularly fitted to do so, so well fitted that

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it should of its own accord present itself to us as a sign of obedience or of disobedience, by which, if man should violate it, he might be seen and judged to have cast off the love of God and of his neighbour. It was therefore a sign for trial, and hence it is plain that there was nothing in it with which we can find fault, that it was wisely and for necessary reasons given to man, not to ensnare and seduce him but to preserve him from destruction and to confirm him in innocence.

CHAPTER XXVII.

THE COVENANT OF WORKS.

THE THREATENING—IMPORT OF THE TERM DEATH—THE NATURAL CONDITION OF MAN VIEWED IN REFERENCE TO GOD AND TO MAN HIMSELF—THE ACCIDENTAL CONDITION A MANIFESTATION OR EXTERNAL SIGN OF THE NATURAL —THE SABBATH—IN WHAT SENSE SANCTIFIED BY GOD—COVENANT DEFINED —ITS FORM—DIFFERENT KINDS OF COVENANTS—COVENANT OF WORKS—ITS FOUNDATIONS AND CONSEQUENCES—OBJECTIONS.

2. The threatening with which the prohibition was sanctioned is contained in these words, "In the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die." Now the question presents itself, what are we to understand by the death here mentioned? Death is of three kinds, corporeal, spiritual, and eternal, in opposition to three kinds of life respectively so called.

(.) *Corporeal* or animal life consists of the union of soul and body, a union by which man is fitted for discharging the functions for which he is designed in this world. In opposition to this, corporeal death denotes the cessation of these functions and the dissolution of the bodily frame, by which man is rendered unfit for any longer discharging the functions of life. In this sense the term death is used everywhere among all men and also in Scripture.

(..) *Spiritual* life is a power of acting (actuositas) proceeding from the fixed principle of love to God and man, from a regard to the divine glory, and in conformity to the divine law, in all truth, virtue, and godliness. In opposition to this, spiritual death denotes a continual course of sinning, a habitual violation of the law which

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enjoins love to God and to man—proceeding from the fixed principle of self-love and of carnal desire. The expression spiritual life in this sense often occurs in Scripture, but not so death, although such may be its meaning when man is represented as being dead in sins. In the Old Testament, however, we do not find it bearing this signification.

(∴) *Eternal* life is the very intimate communion which we enjoy with God—the perfection of all our faculties and parts in glory together with consummate happiness and a pure conscience. In opposition to this is eternal death, which means a state of shame and dishonour—a state in which we are disquieted by an evil conscience and are separated from God, and thus from the chief good and from all happiness, and in which moreover we are visited with every physical and moral evil. This state is called in Scripture *the second death.*

Now in which of these senses is the death mentioned in the threatening to be understood? What is the import of the expression "thou shalt surely die?" There is no doubt, we think, that temporal death is here meant. This is denied by Pelagians and Socinians, who maintain that death is the consequence of nature, and not the punishment of sin, and that God therefore threatened not that Adam would die in this sense, because he would do so in the course of nature, but only that he would become subject to sin and to eternal death.

But (*a.*) The phrase "thou shalt surely die" uniformly in Scripture signifies temporal death, and is never employed in any other sense. (*b.*) When God pronounced sentence upon fallen man, he expressed it by *returning to the dust,*—"dust thou art and unto dust shalt thou return," Gen. iii. 19. And certainly he did not denounce after the fall a different death from what he threatened before it. (*c.*) Temporal death is presented to us as a grievous calamity, because it is the dissolution of the parts of which man is composed. This dissolution is so opposed to our natural desires, that they all recoil from it as something that was unknown in a state of innocence and that must be the consequence only of sin and of the fall, because it cannot but be attended with a troublesome feeling, with anxiety, with much pain and torment. All these miseries and physical evils, therefore, must be traced to sin as their origin. (*d.*) In harmony with this Scripture calls death "the wages of sin," Rom. vi. 23. "As in Adam all die so in Christ shall all be made alive," 1 Cor. xv. 22. Death, therefore, is here to be understood as temporal.

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Some however object that man did not immediately die, although God said, "in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die," and therefore that temporal death is not meant. But in reply to this we say, that although God might defer the execution of the threatening, the threatening was virtually fulfilled if man from the moment of his fall became liable to death. So that when God says "thou shalt surely die," the meaning will be "thou wilt be mortal from the moment of thy fall—thou wilt have in thee the cause of death—death shall certainly overtake thee—thou shalt actually die." Just as Solomon said to Shimei, "It shall be, that, on the day thou goest out and passest over the brook Kidron, thou shalt know for certain that thou shalt surely die," 1 Kings ii. 37; and yet he did not immediately die but was condemned to death; so in this case "thou shalt die" is the same as "thou art sentenced to death—death will at one time or other overtake thee."

How then, it may be asked, can we reconcile our doctrine that temporal death is the penalty of sin, with our belief that by the obedience of Christ we are delivered from all the penal effects of sin? We reply

(.) That death in the case of believers is not the punishment of sin strictly so called. It has indeed something penal in it, as chastisements have; but not properly what is called punishment, because the reason of punishment is removed. It is only the pathway to eternal life.

(..) We are delivered from temporal death, inasmuch as in respect of believers it is no longer connected with eternal death and will be abolished by the resurrection. Neither does it remove and shut us out from the favour of God. He who believes in Christ cannot die, because he does not undergo death as the punishment of sin and as connected with eternal death. Therefore by the death in the threatening we are to understand temporal death.

But does the threatening, it may again be asked, include spiritual and eternal death?

If by spiritual death we understand habitual, deep-rooted, invincible moral depravity, then our only answer is, that it is to be regarded not only as a consequence of the transgression of the prohibition by the permission of God, but also as a delivering over to judgment, inasmuch as man by that one sin fell into that complete moral depravity which we call spiritual death. But if the question be whether spiritual death is comprehended in the threatening and is to be considered in the light of the punishment of sin properly so called, then we reply in the negative

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(.) Because the phrase "thou shalt surely die" has no such meaning in the Old Testament. We nowhere meet with death employed to denote moral depravity, nor does it occur in this sense in any part of Scripture, but always in the sense of temporal death which does not last for ever.

(..) This moral depravity does not properly bear the aspect of punishment, because it is inconsistent with the character of God as a holy and righteous Being to inflict such depravity in the way of punishment. For that is strictly speaking penal in its nature which a judge may inflict. But God cannot be the author of sin and therefore as a judge he cannot inflict it. He may indeed give man up to depravity, Rom. i. 24, but he cannot properly inflict it as a punishment or inflict any punishment opposed to his own perfections, which moral depravity is. The death, therefore, referred to in the threatening does not mean this depravity but the evil consequences which flow from it.

(∴) That which is the cause of punishment cannot be properly called a punishment. Now the violation of a precept is the cause of punishment. But moral depravity and the continual violation of the law whether in habit or in act cannot both be regarded as penal, unless we wish to confound two things, the cause namely and its effect.

(::) This death, moreover, was placed in opposition to the promised life. But the life promised which man would have attained by keeping the law was not strictly speaking holiness but its reward. The death also is therefore not properly depravity but the evil resulting from depravity and the punishment inflicted on account of it.

Are we to understand the threatening as including eternal death, *i.e.*, the misery consequent upon eternal separation from communion with God?

In reply to this question we say that a distinction must be observed between the prohibition to which the threatening is annexed, considered in itself and in its connexion with the natural law of love to God and to our neighbour. For the prohibition may be viewed in two aspects. It may be regarded, *in the first place*, as based upon the natural law, inasmuch as it continually signified and communicated to man a knowledge of that law; so that the former could not be violated without the violation at the same time of the latter. It may be regarded, *in the second place*, abstractedly or by itself, inasmuch as it was an external sign for trial, and thus the violation of it was an external sign of the breach of the natural law. If viewed in the for-

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mer of these aspects the threatening annexed to it comprehends eternal death, not because the mere violation of the prohibition deserved to be so punished, but because the breach of the natural law of love to God and to man had this death annexed to it as its penalty. And consequently the prohibition was also connected with the natural law and could not be violated without also breaking that law. We say accordingly and say truly that in this sense the threatening included also eternal death, because the transgression of the prohibition was inseparably connected with the transgression of the natural law. This was the opinion of the apostle Paul. "By one man," he says, "sin entered into the world and death by sin," Rom. v. 12. It is evident from his subsequent reasoning that by death he understands condemnation, for he speaks of eternal life and sets the two in opposition and contrast to each other, Rom. vi. 23. But if the prohibition be considered in the latter of the two aspects in which we have presented it, *i. e.*, as an external sign of the natural law, then the threatening includes only temporal death. And as this is its primary and real view we say

(.) That temporal death alone is threatened. The phrase employed clearly shews this—a phrase which is uniformly used to denote this kind of death.

(..) When God after the fall pronounced upon man the penalty that was to be inflicted, he made mention only of temporal death, "Dust thou *art* and unto dust thou shalt return," Gen. iii. 19.

(∴) In its primary and direct sense it denotes something which is not revoked by God, something which is unmitigated, which endures from age to age and is inflicted upon all men since the fall. But eternal death is not inflicted upon all. Temporal death however still continues; for we do not read that God delivered man from the threatening "thou shalt surely die." The threatening therefore still continues, and in virtue of it temporal death, which we understand to be implied in it, passes upon every individual of our fallen race.

(::) In short, *whatever view we take of the prohibition such is the view we must take of the threatening.* Now the prohibition was an external sign of the natural law, and therefore when obeyed was a sign of the observance and when broken was a sign of the violation of that law. As this is the proper light in which it should be regarded, the threatening also must be viewed in a corresponding light, as denoting some such evil as should be an external sign that the natural law had been broken. Now this is nothing else than

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temporal death, with its concomitant moral evils, which remains as an external sign even in believers. The meaning of the threatening therefore is this, If you transgress the prohibition, and by this external sign shew that you have cast off the natural law of love to God and to your neighbour, I also ordain death and its accompanying evils to remain as the external sign of this transgression; so that as by obeying the prohibition you would have attained perfection, without undergoing any change (which we call death), now that you have broken it, that perfection will not be attained except by undergoing that change which temporal death involves. This is the direct and proper view of the threatening, in relation to the prohibition considered abstractly or in itself, *i. e.* as an external sign of the natural law, and in conformity to that view temporal death alone must be regarded as included in the threatening.

In this way all difficulties are easily removed, and the opinion regarding eternal death as also included in the threatening remains entire, provided that death be viewed as the consequence of the transgression of the natural law, which was connected with the breach of the prohibition. But if the prohibition be regarded as an external sign, then the threatening includes only temporal death or the death of the body.

From what has been said it is easy to infer what was promised to Adam if he should obey the prohibition. From the law of opposites it is evident that he would not have become liable to death, but would have attained eternal life (although this is not expressly mentioned). By rendering obedience to the natural law, besides, he would have continued in the enjoyment of temporal life as opposed to temporal death, though ere that life could be perfected in heaven he must necessarily at one time or other undergo a change of some kind. This temporal life was promised to him as an external sign of his keeping the prohibition, and now having broken the prohibition he must undergo temporal death as an external sign of his transgression.

Having thus explained the *natural* and *accidental* condition of the first man, *i.e.* the condition in which he was *created* and the condition in which he was *placed*, let us now consider what these conditions properly import.

His *natural* condition or the condition in which he was *created* may be viewed in reference to

1. God and
2. Man himself.

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1. The natural condition of man was that of an upright creature in relation to the Creator and to his purpose in calling him into being, namely, to shew forth his glory. In this condition he also stood to God in the relation of a son to a father. This relationship was shewn in his being placed in Paradise as in his father's house, and in the title which he had to eternal life as the gift and inheritance of his father, as long as he performed the duties which that relationship involved. His natural condition, moreover, was one of dependence. He stood to God in the relation of a servant and subject. The sign of his dependence was the prohibition and also the law written upon his heart—law indicating inferiority on his part and sovereignty on the part of God. In this condition finally he resembled God, and this was shewn in his being created in the divine image and in his being invested with dominion over the creatures.

2. In reference to man himself this condition was one in which he rejoiced in peace of conscience, in a title to eternal life, in holding intimate communion with God, in the profusion of comforts that were bestowed upon him, and in the calm repose which no labour nor trouble disturbed. These were the natural results of his upright condition.

But let us consider his *accidental* state or the state in which he was *placed*, in which there was a manifestation of his natural state and not a manifestation simply, but a proof and trial of it.

There was, we say, in the *accidental* state a manifestation or external sign of the *natural*. God on his part gave man a sign of the relationship in which he stood to him as his Creator, and man also on his part gave a sign of the relationship in which he considered himself as standing to God.

(.) God shewed by a public sign that man was an upright creature —that he was his son—that he had a title to eternal life, and that he might make that title good. He declared this by placing him in Paradise—a garden stored with the most exquisite delights; for Paradise was a sign of this happy life which man enjoyed. There was a sign also in the tree of life which was not only the means of preserving him in the present life but also a token and pledge of eternal life. In the same light we may regard the prohibition regarding the tree of knowledge of good and evil, and the dominion with which man was invested over the creatures, the one namely as a sign of the sovereignty of God, and the other as a sign that man was created in the divine image.

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(..) But man also on his part manifested by signs the relationship in which he considered himself as standing to God, by being carefully on his guard against the tree of knowledge of good and evil, and thus publicly declaring that he considered God as his chief good, in subordination to whose will he regulated his desires and his actions —by tilling the garden according to the divine injunction he had received—and, as he was fitted and designed to do, by contemplating God in all his works and rendering the glory due to him. Among these signs we may also rank man's observance of the day on which God is said to have rested from the work of creation—the day which God blessed—the Paradisaical Sabbath. Moses tells us that, when God had made all things in six days, he "blessed the seventh day and sanctified it, because that in it he had rested from all his work which God created and made," Gen. ii. 3. These words (which formerly gave occasion to no little disputation) refer only to God, and are to be primarily understood as relating only to him, for it is simply said that he "blessed the seventh day and sanctified it." This expression does not mean that he commanded that day to be sanctified by men but that he himself sanctified it. It is one thing to say that man sanctifies the day, and another, that God does so. For here the Sabbath is not instituted to be observed by man, but such a Sabbath as God himself kept.

What kind of Sabbath, then, it may be asked, was this, and how could God be said to sanctify that day?

We answer that he did so in the best and true sense and use of the word. For nothing is meant but that he acted agreeably to the nature and right view of that day. He had finished all his work, and the seventh day was sanctified because on it he did nothing—he rested from his work. This is to sanctify the Sabbath, and therefore nothing more is meant than his resting and not working. Rest accordingly is the sanctification referred to, and God hallowed this day by resting on it. This is further evident from the language employed in the moral law regarding this day, in which the sanctification of it is explained by resting. For the expressions were taken from the observance of the Sabbath as afterwards enjoined upon the Jews, and Moses employs such as were in common use at the time when he wrote. The Jews in like manner understood the sanctification of the Sabbath to mean resting, and regarded those who did not rest on that day as profaning it. Christ says that the priests in the temple profaned the Sabbath, and how?—by labouring and working within its sacred precincts. Therefore as to work on the Sabbath

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is a profanation of the day, so to cease from all work is to sanctify it.

Is there nothing, then, in these words of Moses which man might have turned to his own use?

We say he might have done so not directly but indirectly. For although, as we have said, Moses refers simply to God, he also mentions his resting, for the purpose of giving us to understand that man is bound to imitate the divine example. And what is this? Not, as many suppose, that God in these words instituted the Jewish Sabbath in Paradise and that that Sabbath was kept by Adam. For there is no mark of this Sabbath here, nor did his condition in Paradise admit of it. Such a Sabbath was inconsistent with the situation in which he was there placed.

(.) Because the Jewish Sabbath is a cessation from work and from severe and painful toil—a rest both to man and beast from that labour which is the consequence of sin. But such a rest as this was not required and had no existence in the state of innocence.

(..) The Jewish Sabbath was a sign of sin and of purification from sin, Ezek. xx. 12. For it shewed that man's work was corrupt, and that God could not be worshipped by him unless he ceased from that work—it declared that it was God who had delivered the people from their bondage in Egypt, and that they should rest on it from all sin. Besides,

(∴) We do not read of the Sabbath's being observed before the time of Moses, although at the same time we do not read that it was not. If, however, it had been instituted in Paradise, its observance certainly would not have been overlooked among the ceremonies performed in patriarchal times.

Is there nothing then in the words designed for the use of man? We say certainly. We may draw this conclusion from them, that, if Adam had remained in his state of innocence, God would have encouraged him to keep holy that particular day. For from such a state it may easily be inferred, that it would have been agreeable to God that on every seventh day man should contemplate him in his works, and shew forth his praise and glory,—that, although this could have been done at all times, he should yet remember on that day the great work which God had finished. There was nothing to prevent him from solemnly doing so on that day which was a sign of the finishing of the work of creation. We see nothing in this certainly, at all inconsistent with the condition in which he was placed. We may infer moreover from the words that God designed sometime or

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other to enjoin the sanctification of this day by a peculiar and strict resting from work in remembrance of the finished work of creation. We find that such an injunction was imposed upon the Israelites, Deut. v. 14. We have thus seen that in the *accidental* state there was a certain external sign of the *natural.*

But we said that there was in the *accidental* state not only a *manifestation* but a *proof* or *trial* of the *natural.* God placed man in that state for the purpose of putting his constancy and fidelity to the test, and of affording him an opportunity by the prohibition of making a right use of his liberty. As a father tries his son, the general his soldiers, and a man his friend, with the view of drawing from them some outward sign of friendship or valour, so God dealt with man. On this point there is no difficulty, and it is unnecessary to say more.

The name usually given to the condition in which man was *placed (status accidentalis)*, is the *covenant of works*. In treating this subject we shall

1. Shew what a covenant generally means,
2. Explain what is commonly understood by the covenant of works with its foundations and consequences, and
3. Advert to a distinction which must be observed.

1. We may know what the general meaning of a covenant is by attending to the name given to it in the original. It is called ברית from the root ברה, the primary meaning of which is to *cut in two.* From this sprang other significations, such as choosing as it were by cutting, and setting an object apart to another use. Now the idea of a covenant arises naturally from this meaning of the word—that of *cutting in two* namely,—because formerly a covenant was made by dividing the body of an animal into two parts, and by the parties passing between them, Jer. xxxiv. 18. And hence also we have the expressions *scindere* or *ferire fœdus.* But the name is variously used. It is not only employed to denote a friendly agreement on the part of two or more individuals, but it also denotes this without conveying the idea of a covenant at all. We find it used to express an absolute promise. Such was the covenant which God made with Noah that he would not again destroy the earth by a flood, Gen. ix. 9–11. This was simply a promise on the part of God. We have a similar instance in Is. lix. 21, and in many other passages in which the word means nothing more than simply a promise given by God. It is also used to denote a precept without the idea of a covenant. "I made a *covenant* with mine eyes," Job. xxxi. 1. "They have also

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transgressed my *covenant* which I commanded them," Josh. vii. 11; the injunction namely which he had given the Israelites not to take of the spoils of Jericho. We read again, "They have broken the everlasting *covenant*," Is. xxiv. 5, *i.e.*, the natural law.

A covenant is a voluntary agreement on the part of two or three persons to enter into friendship on certain conditions, or to renew it when broken, and is usually accompanied for the purpose of confirmation by the observance of ceremonies of various kinds.

The *form* of a covenant is twofold, *interior* and *exterior*.

The *interior* form comprehends its essential parts, such as (.) The parties voluntarily contracting, (..) The benefit to be enjoyed by both. (∴) The condition or the law on each side, and (::) The mutual consent freely and spontaneously given.

The *exterior* form comprehends the various rites and ceremonies with which the forming of a covenant was usually accompanied, in order that the consent of the parties might be ratified. These ceremonies were various, such as (.) An oath, as in the case of Abraham with Abimelech king of Gerar, Gen. xxi. 23; (..) Feasting, as happened between Isaac and Abimelech, Gen. xxvi. 30; (∴) The cutting of an animal into two parts, and the passing of the contracting parties between them, to shew that he who should violate the compact would deserve a similar treatment, Jer. xxxiv. 18, and (::) Sacramental rites which were signs and seals of a covenant, as circumcision and the passover under the Old Testament dispensation, and baptism and the Lord's supper under the New.

Covenants are of various kinds. At present we mention only one —we mean a covenant which is formed between either equals or unequals.

In the former the parties are on the same footing in regard to rank and right. In the latter the one party is superior and the other inferior, and such is the covenant of which we are now treating. The parties who entered into it were unequal—God on the one side and man on the other, between whom, although properly speaking there could be no covenant in their case, the agreement nevertheless had something of the appearance of one. Now in a covenant of this description the superior party makes a promise which is called in Scripture ἐντολή, Matt. xxii. 36; and ἐπαγγελία, 2 Tim. i. 1. The inferior party again gives his willing consent to the superior party by whom the promise is made, and upon the condition proposed. This consent is called in Scripture ὁμολογία, 2 Cor. ix. 13; Heb. iii. 1; and perhaps also ἐπερώτημα, which properly denotes a question put by

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the superior party as to whether the proposed condition be accepted, and thus signifies *assent* or *agreement*. But it may also mean the answer which is made to that question, and this is the sense in which the apostle uses it, when he speaks of "the answer of a good conscience," 1 Pet. iii. 21. The inferior party, moreover, on performing the condition, acquires a right to the promised blessings.

2. Let us now explain what is commonly understood by the covenant of works, with its foundations and consequences. There are two covenants, divines say, the covenant of works and the covenant of grace, the former entered into with man in the state of innocence, the second formed with Christ and having reference to man in his fallen state.

The covenant of works it is said consisted in the agreement entered into between God and man, according to which the latter by rendering perfect and uninterrupted obedience to the divine commands in his own strength would have secured for himself the eternal life which was promised.

The covenant of grace again consists in this, that man without any meritorious works on his part, but by faith alone working by love, obtains spiritual and eternal blessings solely by the grace of God, and for the sake of Christ the mediator and surety of the covenant, and enjoys spiritual life, not in virtue of any power of his own, but by the grace of the Spirit imparted to him, so that every thing in the covenant is to be regarded as pure grace. But of this more hereafter.

In explaining the covenant of works we shall keep by the description already given. According to some divines this definition rests on the following grounds.

(.) We have, they say, all the parts of a covenant and therefore it is appropriately so called. The *parties contracting* are God and man in innocence. There is the *promise* of eternal life. We have the *condition*, either the moral law written on the heart of man, or the positive precept respecting the tree of knowledge. And then, moreover, there is the *willing consent* which Adam gave to God who made the promise and who required obedience. Here, therefore, there are all the parts required in a covenant, and there can be no reason why this name should not be given to it.

(..) We also read in one of the prophets, "But they like men have transgressed the covenant," Hos. vi. 7. In this passage the word translated *men* is in the original אדם, *i. e.* the first man Adam, and the violation of the covenant is charged upon him as well as upon Israel; —thus proving that this name should be given to it.

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(∴) In the epistles to the Romans and the Galatians, Paul has set the law and the grace of God or works and faith in opposition to each other, and makes mention of the law of works in contradistinction to righteousness by faith in Christ. And hence the notion of the covenant of works is derived, because he speaks of the law of works and of the works of the law. These are the grounds on which the doctrine of the covenant of works is based.

To these, however, may be added certain consequences or consectaries which are supposed to be connected with that doctrine. If the covenant of works it is said be not admitted, then the other covenants which are only repetitions of it must also be denied.

The *first* of these consequences refers to the Sinaïtic covenant which is regarded as a covenant of works, because it contained a repetition of the natural law. It is held to be a renewal of the covenant first made with man.

The *second* consequence relates to the imputation of the sin of Adam to all his posterity. This imputation is held to be immediate on account of the solitary offence which was committed by Adam in Paradise and the guilt of which lies upon all who descend from him. This imputation is made to rest on the view which is taken of Adam as being namely not only the natural head but as the federal representative of all his posterity, so that the breach of the covenant by him is to be regarded as the sin of those of whom he was the federal head.

The *third* consequence relates to the active obedience of Christ as a surety, by which he satisfied the demands of the divine law, and which is the meritorious cause of eternal life, as distinguished from his passive obedience which is the meritorious cause of the forgiveness of sin. Now this doctrine regarding these two kinds of obedience is made to rest on the obedience which Adam should have rendered to the divine law, and by which, if he had rendered it, he would have merited eternal life for himself and for his posterity. But as Adam and his posterity sinned, Christ must by his passive obedience obtain the remission of their sins, and by his active obedience acquire for them what Adam failed to acquire —eternal life.

Such is a view of the doctrine held regarding the covenant of works—a doctrine which was unknown to the Fathers, and first invented by the scholastic divines—disregarded or rejected by the first reformers, afterwards adopted by theologians, introduced at a later period into our own churches, and which has ever since been a fruitful subject of dispute.

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As there is much difference of opinion on this subject, as neither one theory nor another can be definitively settled by any public authority, and as the opinion now commonly entertained was unknown in ancient times, we may certainly enter freely into the discussion of the subject. And

1. We would have the consequences or consectaries separated from the question, because they are exceedingly doubtful, in our opinion, and as we shall endeavour to shew, false. The Sinaïtic covenant is not a renewal of the covenant of works. No mention is made of the imputation of Adam's sin. The active is improperly separated from the passive obedience of Christ and considered by itself as the meritorious cause of eternal life. But even supposing these consequences were true, yet they are not properly connected with what is taught regarding the covenant of works, seeing that the state of the first man may be conceived to subsist without implying in it any thing conveying the idea of a covenant, and because immediate imputation may be defended by itself, although there be no such covenant. They should therefore be kept completely separate from the question, and those divines judge rashly who suppose that certain doctrines which seem to them of some considerable importance depend on the covenant of works, when the existence of such a covenant cannot be distinctly proved or at least is involved in no little doubt. What are we to say then regarding those doctrines, which they represent as depending on the covenant of works? Assuredly just this that they rest on a very insecure foundation.

But let us enquire into the grounds on which the opinion we are now considering rests, and let us begin with the last *i. e.* the mention made by Paul in the epistles to the Romans and the Galatians of two covenants as opposed to each other. It is surprising that this opinion should be made to rest on what he there says, because he makes no mention of the covenant of works. He speaks only of the law of works and of the works of the law, of law and grace, but not of a covenant between God and Adam in his state of innocence or of the federal condition of our first parent. On the contrary he speaks of the law and of the righteousness of the law, in relation to the law given at Sinai and to the legal dispensation understood according to the opinion of the Jews and to the letter as a certain external covenant to which he opposes the covenant of grace. This has been satisfactorily proved by Vitringa, and to his work we refer the reader.

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The second ground or foundation, *i. e.* the passage from the book of the prophet Hosea, is somewhat stronger than the former. "But they like men (Heb. *like Adam*) have transgressed the covenant," Hos. vi. 7. Here it is said express mention is made of a covenant, and of Adam with whom the Israelites in transgressing the covenant are compared. For the phrase we are told, *like Adam*, cannot signify man in general, but must mean the first man from whom all the rest are descended.

But we reply, that even admitting this explanation it affords no countenance to the idea that there was a covenant between God and Adam, much less that there was a representative covenant or a covenant of works. The word covenant is of ambiguous meaning, and is used sometimes in an absolute sense for a law and precept without any reference whatever to a covenant. Why then might not the sense of this passage be, "As Adam transgressed the prohibition—the law expressly given him, so Israel has broken my law enjoined solemnly upon them." Can the mere notion of a covenant then which is involved in uncertainty be a sufficient basis on which to rest this doctrine?

But even admitting the notion or the proper signification of a covenant, it is not proved that there is any resemblance between the Israelites and Adam, and that the covenant mentioned referred equally to both. For it is well known that in making comparisons we must have a third object in view in which properly comparison consists. Now what in this case is the test of the comparison? Is it a covenant or the manner of the transgression?

We say that it is the manner of the transgression; for the prophet is not comparing with each other a first covenant with Adam and the covenant made with the Israelites so often mentioned by the prophets, but he is comparing the manner in which the chosen people broke the covenant with the manner in which Adam violated the law expressly given to him. In this the resemblance consists. For Adam received a law expressly from God as well as Israel—Adam of his own accord and perversely transgressed that law as well as Israel. It is in the manner of the transgression therefore that we are to seek for the similitude or the third object with which the two are compared, and therefore the interpretation of this passage still remains involved in doubt. But we have an argument to adduce in favour of our explanation—an argument drawn from Scripture which also makes the resemblance to consist in the manner of transgression. Paul speaks of some who have not sinned "after the similitude of Adam's transgression," Rom.

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v. 14. Some therefore have so sinned. And inasmuch namely as Adam broke the law which was expressly enjoined upon him, the Israelites were like him in this respect, and all resemble him who transgress a law which they have received and known. This is not applicable to infants, and therefore the apostle says that they do not sin after the similitude of Adam's transgression. This interpretation is countenanced by other passages of Scripture. Thus we read, "If I covered my transgressions as Adam by hiding mine iniquity in my bosom," Job xxxi. 33. Is the transgression the point of comparison here? Unquestionably not, but the manner of covering or concealing. We read again, "Neither let us tempt Christ, as some of them also tempted and were destroyed of serpents," 1 Cor. x. 9. The subject of the comparison here is not Christ but the temptation: "let us not," as if he had said, "tempt Christ in the way in which the Israelites tempted their deliverer."

But the expression "like Adam" and the whole passage is capable of another interpretation and may mean they have become like Adam, just as we find in the 8th and 9th verses "Gilead is a city," &c., *i. e.* their city is like Gilead, and "as troops of robbers" &c., *i. e.* their priests are as it were a troop of robbers. What then is it to be "like Adam?" It means that they are like the heathen and act as if they were not joined to me by covenant. For Adam does not always signify the first man but also the heathen who are sometimes expressly called by this name in Scripture, and Adam and Israel are in some passages opposed to each other, the latter as a people in covenant and the former as not,—the sons of Adam and the sons of God. Now such also may be the meaning of this passage. They, that is to say, are like Adam, inasmuch as they act like those who are not related to me by covenant—they have transgressed the covenant—they act in regard to it like the heathen. In other words, by violating the covenant they have brought themselves into a condition resembling that of the heathen. From this passage therefore the existence of a covenant cannot be certainly and satisfactorily proved.

The third ground or foundation is this, that we have here all the parts of a covenant and therefore the name of a covenant cannot but be applied to it.

But we answer that, while we admit that we have these parts *materially*, we deny that we have them *formally*. There is the substance but the form is wanting, which however a covenant of necessity requires both internally and externally. Yet neither of these is mentioned. For we nowhere read of a covenant between God and man

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or Adam (and this in the present case is absolutely indispensable), nor have we the internal form of a covenant—the willing consent of the contracting parties.

But to make the distinction clearer, whether, namely, the notion of a covenant of works taken in its true sense agrees with a state of innocence, let us keep in mind the difference between the state in which man was created and the state in which he was placed.

In regard to the former, which we have already described, we wish it to be especially observed,

(.) If a federal state be not inconsistent with it, yet a covenant of works is so; because that covenant in its nature and signification implied that man in virtue of his obedience might attain a blessing as a reward in the exercise of his own powers. But the idea of reward and merit properly so called is as inconsistent with the natural state of uprightness as with the state of grace. For whatever man possessed in that state he was indebted for it to his Creator, and in his unfallen state was bound to worship God without constraint. He stood moreover in the relation of a son to God, and accordingly as a son would have obtained every blessing as his inheritance if he had continued in that state. Still less can eternal life be regarded in the light of merit and reward, because there is no proportion between it and the obedience which man renders here. So far moreover from man's being able to merit any blessing for others, *i. e.* for his posterity, he cannot do so even for himself. Every thing therefore that enters into the covenant relation must be kept out of view in this case, because such a relation implies the existence of merit.

(..) The notion of a covenant, besides, without taking merit into consideration at all, is obviously useless, because it does not serve to give us a clearer understanding of what the natural state was. This state moreover does not require that there should be a covenant. For to what end and for what reason is a covenant made? Is it to make or confirm friendship or to form or strengthen a mutual obligation? Neither of these can be affirmed in the present case. For friendship already existed between God and man, as close and intimate as it is possible to conceive; while the obligation under which man lay and which flowed from his very nature was too strong to require any confirmation. What purpose then could a covenant serve? A mutual obligation between a father and a son does not need certainly that a covenant be formed to constitute or strengthen that obligation, because that obligation cannot be rendered more binding by a covenant than it naturally is.

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(∴) But if a covenant be of no service in the natural state it may perhaps be said that that state admits of an alliance or agreement of some kind. Let us see.

First, then, if the natural admit of a federal state (*status fœderalis*) this must be derived only from the view taken of the former. Now Moses nowhere calls it by the name of a covenant, and there is no reason why he should have done so. If it be said therefore that it was a federal state, this must necessarily spring from the idea of the natural state as being really such. But this no one probably will affirm because then the two states could not be separated from each other. Why then should the natural state be called federal? In the *second* place, the notions of a natural and federal state are so widely different that they cannot consist with each other. It is not sufficient to the federal state that there are contracting parties, mutual consent, a promise and conditions. These have reference only to the matter of a covenant not to its form and essence. Something more is required.

Let us examine then whether the notions of the two states agree. We hold that they do not, because they mutually exclude each other. There are two things especially which serve to mark out the distinction between them.

(.) The natural state is necessary;—the federal state is free. Friendship or obligation in the former springs from the natural relationship which subsists between God and man, whereas in the latter it is the result of compact, and mutual and free consent. In the former man is bound by nature to love and worship God; in the latter obligation springs only from his voluntary consent, it is spontaneous and in other circumstances would not be binding upon him. Is there no difference then between these? between man's being by nature under an obligation, and his being under it by his own free consent? Unquestionably there is. The former belongs to the natural state, the latter to the federal state—in which, but for its federal character, man would not have been under such an obligation. The natural obligation therefore must always be necessary—the federal presupposes consent freely given. The obligation, for instance, between father and son arises out of the natural relation in which they stand to each other. The two things then are certainly different—to be under a natural obligation, and to come under an obligation of one's own accord. But free consent as we have said belongs to the nature of a covenant and is its essential property.

(..) There is still another distinction between them. In the natural

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state the obligation is coeval with it, whereas in the federal state the obligation is superinduced by the formation of a covenant which supposes that friendship does not exist or that it is to be renewed, otherwise the making of a covenant would be superfluous. The federal state accordingly is not contemporaneous with the natural but is always subsequent to it. They are not the same, therefore, nor ought the ideas of them to be confounded. In a word, the natural state is perpetual, the federal is accessary, and therefore in our opinion the former is improperly represented under the idea of a covenant. But if any choose to understand a covenant in so wide a sense as to embrace in it any kind of obligation and connection between two parties—their mutual agreement to the same laws, the same conditions, and the same benefits promised,—we certainly will not dispute about the word. We are quite willing that every man give what name he chooses to this state. Let it be called a covenant then, if nothing else be understood than that there were certain laws and promises in the natural state. But if the question be concerning the proper signification and use of the word covenant, then we hold that the natural state is improperly called federal, and that the two states cannot be confounded with each other.

Let us now consider the condition in which man was placed, and which according to the account given by Moses consisted in the prohibition with the threatening of death annexed to it, "In the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die."

Is this state properly called a covenant and a covenant of works? We answer

(.) That it is nowhere so called by Moses nor in any other part of Scripture. Why therefore should the federal state be contended for with as much eagerness as if it were a matter of life and death?

(..) In every covenant, even in that which is divine, a promise always holds the first place. The very nature of the thing requires this, and Scripture when speaking of any covenant made by God uniformly teaches this. But there is no express mention of a promise in this case. We have only a prohibition and a threatening. Unquestionably if Scripture designed to represent this state as federal it would have made especial mention of a promise given to the first man, and would afterwards have added the threatening. The promise as we have said may indeed by the law of opposition be inferred from the threatening, by implication we mean. This we do not deny, but it is not sufficient to confirm the notion that this state was one of covenant. There is no mention of a promise—there is only a prohib-

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ition and threatening, and we leave it to be judged whether these can be called a covenant of any kind or a covenant of works.

(∴) In the covenants of which Scripture speaks we uniformly find sacraments used as signs serving to ratify and confirm them. But in this case there is no sacrament, no external sign nor seal of a covenant. The tree of life indeed was a sign of eternal life but it was not the sign of a covenant. The types of certain things are not always to be viewed in the light of sacraments. In the present instance we see nothing that can be considered as an external sign or sacrament of a covenant. The tree of knowledge of good and evil cannot, as some maintain, be so regarded, because it was the use only of that tree which was forbidden to man. But it was not the sign of a covenant, not to speak of the impropriety of confounding a prohibition with a sacrament.

(::) A state of probation, moreover, is utterly inconsistent with a covenant of works, for by observing the prohibition man could merit nothing. This state however was really one of trial in which he was to give an external sign of his obedience. But this does not imply that there was any covenant or sacramental sign of it. And Adam by abstaining from the tree did nothing more than shew by an external sign that he kept the natural law and acted agreeably to the relations in which he stood to God, such as may have place in a probationary state, but he did nothing which suggests the idea that his condition was one in which he could merit any thing at the hand of God.

But still some may ask whether the consent or agreement between God and Adam may be understood after the manner of a covenant, in reference, that is, to the way in which man was put to the test by means of the prohibition and the threatening, such as may exist between a father and a son when they agree in the manner of shewing their fidelity by giving also an external sign of it.

We do not deny that in such a sense this state may be called a covenant, not however a covenant of works but as we have said a covenant of probation.

We have said enough we think to establish the doctrine which we hold on this subject and to show that there was no such thing as a covenant of works. We hold that there was no such covenant in the natural state and speak simply of the condition of man in innocence as consisting of that in which he was created and of that in which he was placed.

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CHAPTER XXVIII.

THE FALL.

THE FALL OF MAN—ITS CAUSE—EXTERIOR AND INTERIOR—THE TEMPTER—THE MANNER AND VARIOUS STEPS OF HIS TEMPTATION—NATURE OF THE FALL—ITS QUALITY AND QUANTITY—PROVIDENCE OF GOD EXERCISED IN PERMITTING AND DIRECTING THE FALL.

II. The second condition in which we are to consider man is that which is called the *condition of the fall* or *the condition of sin*, and which is the consequence of the fall of our first parents. In treating of this subject we shall speak

A. Of the fall itself as the origin of this condition of sin and

B. Of this condition of sin or of the consequences and effects of the fall.

A. In regard to the fall, it is evident that the first man did not continue in his state of uprightness, but fell before a temptation which was presented to him by Satan and thus revolted from God and his law. We designate this the fall, which took place by the wise permission and under the direction of God. We must therefore advert

א To the fall itself and

ב To the Providence of God in reference to it, and shew that he is not the author of the fall and of sin.

א In treating of the fall we shall consider

(*α.*) Its cause.

(*β.*) Its nature.

(*γ.*) Its circumstances of time and place.

(*α.*) The *cause* of the fall is

1. Exterior and
2. Interior.

1. The *exterior* cause of the fall, as the name indicates, is temptation. For, as man was created upright, he would not of his own accord have revolted from God, unless there had been a reason moving him to do so—unless some object had been placed in his way against which he stumbled. This is what we characterise by the name of temptation.

Let us therefore inquire into

* The tempter himself and

** The manner and various steps of his temptation.

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* Moses calls the tempter a serpent. What are we to understand by a serpent? We reply particularly (and in this all divines are agreed) that we are to regard as the tempter not this animal but a certain rational subject called by its name. This is taught us elsewhere in Scripture, which declares that the devil was the cause of the fall, that he deceived Eve, and that he is the old serpent, John viii. 44; 2 Cor. xi. 3; Rev. xii. 9. The narrative itself, besides, clearly enough shews this, for it mentions a conversation between the woman and the serpent; it represents God as erecting his tribunal and summoning Satan to stand before it, all which would partake too much of a dramatic representation unless the serpent were the rational subject endued with understanding and will whom we call the devil.

This is universally admitted, although by some the history is interpreted allegorically, while others even in the present day adhere, but without reason, to the opinion that a real serpent was employed in the temptation.

But another question presents itself—why, namely, if the devil were the tempter, Moses gave him the name of a serpent? On this question theologians are divided in opinion. For some, and indeed the great majority of them, explain this narrative by synechdoche of a part for the whole, and say that Moses has related only a part but that the whole subject is understood. They affirm, namely, that Satan appeared with the animal and so concealed himself under its form that he possessed and quickened it, and that on this account Moses gave Satan this name.

Others, however, deny that Satan was present under the appearance of this animal. They hold that he was here in the form of an angel of light and that there was no serpent, but that he is metaphorically so called by Moses because this animal is an image of the devil and because of the resemblance there is, metaphorically speaking, between the attributes of both. This opinion was held by some of the ancients, and among more modern divines by Amyraldus and the elder and younger Vitringa, whose dissertations are in the hands of all. It seems to us also to be the more plausible opinion of the two.

We shall present in brief compass the arguments by which this opinion is supported, because the question does not seem to us to be of very material importance, and because it has been discussed at length by other writers.

1. The first argument consists of the paradoxes which spontane-

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ously result from the common opinion that in the temptation Satan took possession of a serpent properly so called.

(.) There is the inexplicable paradox why Satan did not rather appear as an angel of light, a form which he could have easily assumed, as angels were wont to do. Nay, Satan is said to have transformed himself into an angel of light, 2 Cor. xi. 14. Why, we say, did he not also take to himself this form by which certainly he could have more easily imposed upon Eve? But if, on the contrary, it be maintained that he appeared in the form of a serpent, what reason will be given for this strange opinion? It will not do to say that he employed this animal as his instrument because of its hostility to man. For besides the fact that there was no such hostility—seeing that man and the inferior animals were still on friendly terms with each other—besides this, we say, what service could the serpent render to Satan in carrying on his temptation? He must certainly have assumed an appearance in which he might more easily succeed in his deception. But the serpent properly so called could be of no service in this matter—it was a mere instrument, and what need, therefore, could Satan have for an animal of this kind?

(..) Eve suspected no evil, and was not struck with wonder when she heard the animal speaking; yet this unquestionably was unnatural, for no one will say that speech was the property of the serpent. If, therefore, she heard it entering into conversation with her, this must undoubtedly have produced in her an unfavourable impression. Yet we do not read of her being filled with astonishment—a plain proof, we think, that there was no serpent in the case.

(∴) If the opposite opinion be correct, then Moses in narrating the transaction makes mention only of the instrument and not of the principal author of the temptation. He relates only what presented itself to the senses but what at the same time was of no use in the history itself. Then he should also have represented Satan as standing in the form of a serpent at the tribunal of God and hearing the sentence pronounced upon him. Yet he introduces Satan alone as standing there. But this certainly is not consistent with the character of a skilful historian, especially of one whose narrative is so simple; and it cannot therefore be supposed that he should allude to the instrument alone without making any mention at all of the principal agent.

2. A second argument is drawn from the name by which the devil is designated in Scripture. Moses calls him a serpent, and Script-

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ure teaches us that Satan from this transaction was called expressly the old serpent, 2 Cor. xi. 3 ; Rev. xii. 9.

Now the question is, if Satan made use of the serpent, how is this to be reconciled with the fact of his being expressly called the serpent, and with reference to this temptation the old serpent? How could he be called the serpent itself? It may be said perhaps, that he is so called because he on this occasion employed the animal as his instrument, that, as Moses has made mention only of the animal, no other reason can be given than that he took possession of it, and that, if this be the reason why this name is given to him, then certainly the principal agent might take his name from the instrument. But such a thing was never heard of and is utterly repugnant to reason. The historian indeed may relate a matter in such a way as to make mention only of the instrument, because according to the hypothesis which we are now combating nothing but the serpent presented itself to the senses. But the principal agent could not for this reason be called absolutely the serpent, he could not retain this name, he could not keep by the designation of the instrumental cause, any more than he could be called a man because he sometimes took possession of the body of a man, or than the angel that spoke by Balaam's ass could be called the ass itself. This would be too absurd. But if, according to our opinion, the resemblance between the properties of the serpent and of the devil be attended to, then a reason may easily be given why Satan is called a serpent and the old serpent—metaphorically, we mean, because of the resemblance to which we have just referred. We infer, therefore, that by the serpent mentioned by Moses we are to understand the devil, and that he is expressly called, in allusion to this narrative, the serpent and the old serpent.

3. A third argument is drawn from the language used by Moses when about to enter upon his history of the temptation. "The serpent," he says, "was more subtile than any beast of the field," Gen. iii. 1. Every word in this verse contains an argument against there having been in reality such an animal.

(.) It is not simply said a serpent, but "the serpent" emphatically so called. This is confirmed by Paul when he says not that a serpent but that "the serpent beguiled Eve," 2 Cor. xi. 3,—language which is easily understood if Satan be alluded to, but which is altogether without meaning and force if it be meant of the animal so called.

(..) The serpent is said to be "more subtile than any beast of the

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field," and thus superior to all the other animals. But such language is inapplicable to the serpent, for there are other animals—dogs, for instance, lions, horses, elephants—far more cunning than it. It is true, indeed, that it is celebrated for its subtlety. "Be ye wise as serpents," Matt. x. 16. This, however, is not to be understood generally nor in relation to the narrative before us, but only in respect of that property or quality by which it is led to guard itself against a deadly wound. Thus God speaks of its cunning not for a bad but for a good end, that men may guard against danger just as it is wont to do by averting and covering its head.

(∴) The expression "was more subtile" tacitly intimates that we are to understand it as referring not to the serpent properly so called, but to a subject superior in excellence to the other animals. The words are added, moreover, that we might not suppose them to apply to the serpent, but that we might consider them as applicable to a being not included among the lower animals and far excelling them all in cunning.

(::) If, besides, we attend to the design of the sacred historian in mentioning this subtlety, we must withdraw our regards from the serpent. For why does he take notice of its cunning at the beginning of the temptation? Not certainly without reason. And yet no other reason can be given than that the history of the fall might be more easily understood, and not that the fall itself might seem to us so strange, because "the serpent was more subtile than any beast of the field"—that is to say, had power to deceive man because of his extreme cunning. We must understand by the tempter, therefore, one who by his own subtlety succeeded in imposing upon man. This being admitted, we cannot certainly suppose that a serpent was the tempter, for however subtile it may have been it was unable of itself to tempt our first parents—it was a mere instrument in the hand of another. We must therefore interpret what is said of it as referring to Satan, who was superior in cunning to every beast of the field.

4. A fourth argument is drawn from the sentence which God pronounced upon the serpent. "Because thou hast done this, thou *art* cursed above all cattle, and above every beast of the field; upon thy belly shalt thou go, and dust shalt thou eat all the days of thy life." And I will put enmity between thee and the woman," &c., Gen. iii. 14, 15.

What are we to understand by the serpent in this passage? Not certainly a serpent in the usual sense of the term; for it is natural to

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that animal to creep upon its belly and to eat the dust. Neither can it be said that it is more hostile to saints than to other men and that for this reason it should be so punished. The expressions used regarding it, therefore, are metaphorical. If they are not to be so interpreted, then we must entertain the foolish notion, that previously to this event the serpent did not go upon its belly or eat dust. And then how could it have been visited with punishment of which it was not a proper subject? How, moreover, could all serpents have been condemned for the sin of this one? It is plain, we think, that the tempter in the subsequent part of this chapter is the same who is mentioned in the beginning of it. For the history is a continuous one—the matter referred to in it is the same. Satan, therefore, is the tempter in both parts of it. And, accordingly, when the serpent is said to be "more subtile than any beast of the field," this language must be understood as applying to him, and without any reference to the animal so called. For all that is said is quite in keeping with his character, while the first announcement of the Gospel contained in this chapter leads us to infer that he is the person by whom the temptation was effected. We conclude, therefore, that Moses called him a serpent on account of the resemblance between their properties, and according to the well-known style of speaking in the East, and that Satan presented himself not in the form of a serpent, but in the person of an angel of light. This was more suited to the design which he had in view. An apostle expressly says, that "Satan himself is transformed into an angel of light," 2 Cor. xi. 14. If we except the narrative of the temptation, no mention is made elsewhere in Scripture of such an occurrence. The apostle in the beginning of the chapter just quoted manifestly refers to this history and to the tempter who beguiled Eve, and speaks of his transformation in connection with that history.

** The next point to be considered is the *manner* and *progress* of the temptation. When Moses called Satan a serpent, he designed thereby to indicate that the temptation was marked by subtlety and malice, which are the properties of the serpent. And if we attend to the description of it given by the sacred historian, we will perceive several instances of these.

1. In his selecting the woman as the object of his temptation. She was no doubt as innocent and upright as Adam himself; but she was weaker and more easily overcome, possessed of stronger feelings, with a will more susceptible of change, and accordingly more readily moved and affected.

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2. In selecting her when she was separated from her husband, and alone, when she could not have recourse to his assistance and advice, and accordingly in circumstances in which the temptation would more easily succeed.

3. In securing her attention to himself before he began his assault, and in alienating her affections from God, by throwing out unfavourable insinuations against him. To this pertain, *first*, his appearing in the person of an angel of light; *secondly*, his pretending that he was very much disposed to promote the happiness and perfection of man, as is evident from his holding out the promise of supreme excellence and of resemblance to God, and this for the purpose of gaining the affections of the woman; and *thirdly*, his wishing to withdraw her affections from God by suggesting evil thoughts. This may be inferred from the indirect way in which the history of the temptation begins. For Satan is represented as saying to the woman abruptly, "Yea hath God said," &c., implying, we think, that they had previously been engaged in a conversation in which he insinuated that God was not so well affected toward her and Adam as she supposed, and, therefore, that he envied them the happy condition in which he had placed them. In proof of this Satan adduced the command laid upon them not to eat of the fruit of Paradise. It is evident as if he had said, that God is ill disposed towards you because he has said, "Ye shall not eat," &c. His language is designedly ambiguous, and may be understood as intimating that the command was universal or restricted. If God has said that you are to eat of the fruit of no tree, this proves that he is all the more strongly disaffected towards you. If he has said that you shall not eat of the fruit of every tree, there is still proof of disaffection on his part, as if he envied you the enjoyment of what he himself has provided, and prohibited you from partaking of the tree of knowledge of good and evil. It is evident that it was Satan's design in the language which he used to prove that God was alienated from them in affection, and thus to engage the woman all the more strongly to himself.

4. In representing the prohibition as indifferent, of little importance, and even as unreasonable, in order that she might be the more easily induced by the pleasantness and desirableness of the tree to violate it. Because unimportant and trifling though the prohibition seemed, it was not in reality so, and he knew well that man could not disobey it, without effecting a complete change in his condition, without publicly renouncing his holiness and allegiance to God.

5. In making use of every argument fitted to impose upon Eve.

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(.) The tree, he said, was to be desired on account of the accession to their knowledge with which the eating of the fruit of it would be accompanied. (..) The tree was called the "tree of knowledge of good and evil," and the only reason why it bore this name was, that it was calculated to make their knowledge perfect, just as for a similar reason the other tree was called "the tree of life." (∴) Still one difficulty remained in the form of the threatening annexed to the prohibition, "God hath said," was Eve's language, "ye shall not eat of it, neither shall ye touch it, lest ye die." Satan's excessive malignity is seen in his endeavouring with such boldness to allay the fear which this threatening awakened in the mind of Eve. God knoweth, he hinted, that ye shall not die, but that ye shall be as gods. He thus directly charged God with falsehood, but at the same time proved that he himself was the father of lies, John viii. 44. Yet he thus confidently appealed to God, at once to confute what the woman had said, and to withdraw her affections from her creator. Such is the *exterior* form of the temptation, as far as we are able to comprehend it.

2. But there was also the *interior* cause of the fall, that is to say there were various affections and states of mind on the part of the woman to which Satan's temptation gave rise, and which ended in the fall. These were

(.) The inordinate desire which she cherished for her own happiness. A longing after perfection was no doubt natural, but the first step towards her fall was her allowing this longing to become inordinate, and not keeping it within its proper bounds. Hence arose

(..) Imprudence in her not instantly repelling a temptation which was directly opposed to the divine threatening, and to the express command which she had received not to eat, and in not communicating and consulting with her husband, but in entering into conversation on the subject with the tempter. This imprudence and her ardent desire gave rise to

(∴) Doubt regarding the truth of the threatening, and to the thought that probably the suggestion and reasoning of Satan might be correct. This was a still bolder step on her part. She began to speculate whether what Satan had said might not be true, and to hesitate in the face of an express command sanctioned by a no less express threatening. And then came the last step—

(::) Her assenting to the probable truth of Satan's reasoning. She had taken for granted what he had said regarding the name and nature of the tree, and what he had so confidently affirmed, that though

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man should eat of it he would not die, but would become like God. Hence by the suggestion made by the tempter, she was prevailed upon to eat, and to believe that God was not so much their friend, nor so desirous to promote their happiness, and that, therefore, he had forbidden them to eat of that particular tree. And thus accordingly Eve fell. Adam however was still innocent. Paul says "that he was not deceived, but the woman being deceived was in the transgression," 1 Tim. ii. 14. Not that he was not also deceived, but that he was not deceived directly by Satan, but indirectly by the woman. The same reasonings indeed were addressed to him, and by him assented to, but they would not in themselves have had so much power, if he had not had the example of Eve. She had suspected and perceived no evil. Adam saw that no bad consequences had resulted to her from what she had done, and thus he was led by her example to eat. In this sense she is said to have been the cause of the transgression, because it originated with her, and because she drew her husband along with her.

(β.) In speaking of the *nature* of the fall, or of the nature of the sin which caused it, two things must be attended to.

1. Its quality.
2. Its quantity.

1. Its *quality*—because there are sins of ignorance, imprudence, inadvertency, lust, and presumption. But this was not a sin of ignorance, because our first parents were aware of the prohibition which God had issued, as is evident from the history of the temptation. As we have already seen they were chargeable also with imprudence and immoderate desire.

In regard to *presumption* it cannot be denied that the sin they committed was of this kind, both because they violated an express well-known command of God, and because they did so from an unfavourable opinion regarding the affection which God cherished toward them, and from a sinful distrust of his truth and sincerity. For it is evident from what has been said, that Satan in the reasoning which he employed aimed at persuading the woman that God was not well affected towards them, had no desire to promote their happiness, and therefore imposed upon them this injunction, that although God had annexed to this injunction a threatening of death, the contrary was true, and that, although God willed not his perfection, he might, whether God would or not, attain that perfection by eating the fruit of the tree. If all these things were assented to by our first parents, as it must be admitted they were, it cannot certainly be denied that

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their love to God was completely changed, and that, having cast off that love and become alienated from him, they fell into sin. This is evident from the fall that ensued. For if that had been only a transitory act, how could they have instantly fallen into such a state of wretchedness as that in which they were involved? There is good reason therefore to conclude that there was every thing in their sin tending to aggravate it in the sight of God.

2. The *quantity* or aggravation of this sin does not wholly depend on the circumstances in which it was committed—on man's having been placed for instance in a garden abundantly stored with all manner of pleasant things. In such a situation it would not have been wonderful or of so much consequence had he been carried away by inordinate desire. The circumstances indeed may be taken into consideration, but we cannot look upon them as constituting the aggravated nature of the particular sin which he committed.

(.) Because the prohibition was intended for trial and therefore in violating it he publicly shewed that he had cast off his allegiance to God.

(..) Because he fell completely from God, in consequence of his mind being alienated from him and filled with carnal self-love. This must be admitted, otherwise we cannot understand how by this single action he should have become totally depraved. It only remains therefore that we advert

(γ.) To the circumstances of the fall.

And, *first*, we must consider the *place* where it occurred. That place was Paradise, and on this account man was all the more vile and inexcusable in committing such a sin in a scene so delightful and happy, and so replenished with all that could minister to his satisfaction. This served no doubt to aggravate the sin itself, for he was in possession of every thing, he was to abstain only from one tree, and yet in the face of an express command he took and ate of its fruit. But

Secondly, we must attend to the *time* of the fall. Although we are unable to come to any decision on this point, there are two extremes against which we should be upon our guard. The one is that man fell on the very day on which he was created; the other, that he continued for some considerable time in his upright condition. Several have fallen into one or other of these extremes. But

(*a*.) Man did not fall on the day of his creation (.) Because God rested on the seventh day when yet all the works which he had made were good. Yet man was created on the sixth day. (..) Because

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many other circumstances occurred between the creation and the fall of man which cannot be referred to one day. For instance, after creation was finished, he planted the garden in Paradise and appointed Adam to till it—he formed Eve from his side—he caused the animals to pass before him to receive from him their respective names —all which things required more than one day. (∴) If man had fallen so soon after being created, Paradise would have been of no use. But on the other hand

(*b.*) Neither must the fall of man be removed to too great a distance from the period of his creation. (.) Not only because Adam did not know Eve as long as they were in a state of innocence, but (..) Because the explanation of the fall would thus be rendered more difficult. For if man had remained long in his original condition and had become more familiarly acquainted with God, we can scarcely understand how he could have been so easily led away from him by any unfavourable suggestions. Deep-rooted habits are not so easily changed. By repeated acts man would have attained a far higher measure of prudence than to suffer himself to be so readily deceived. But if it be asked how long he continued in his first estate, we give no decisive reply—we only say that he did not fall immediately upon being created and that he did not continue very long. It is not necessary, besides, that we should know the precise interval that elapsed between the two events.

3 We come now to treat of the providence of God exercised in permitting and directing the fall, with the view of proving and vindicating his holiness, justice, wisdom, and goodness, and of shewing that as the governor of the universe no charge can be brought against him.

(*a.*) The *holiness* of God is not affected by the fall. (.) Because he was neither directly nor indirectly the efficient cause of it. This is evident if we bear in mind what has already been said regarding his co-operation (*concursus*) in reference to sinful actions. (..) He gave man a command for the purpose of putting him to the test, but he did not tempt him—he did not impose the command in order that man might violate it, far less that he might be excited to do so, but that he might be on his guard and by keeping it be confirmed in innocence. The temptation proceeded from Satan, and by that temptation his desires as we have seen were excited. Lust is not of the Father, 1 John ii. 16. God tempteth no man; "but every man is tempted when he is drawn away of his own lust and enticed," James i. 14.

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(*b.*) The same may be said of the *justice* of God. (.) Because he gave man powers sufficient to enable him to continue in his unfallen state,—understanding, judgment, will, all upright dispositions, as we have already seen, both of body and of mind. (..) Because he not only endued man with these powers, but furnished him, besides, with every thing that was fitted to enable him to continue in the condition in which he was placed and to overcome the temptation by which he was assailed. With this view the tree of life was placed before his eyes to remind him of the blessing which he would secure by obedience, and the tree of knowledge of good and evil, that by the threatening which God had issued regarding it he might be on his guard against transgression, and that by the evil which the threatening comprehended he might be kept from sinning. He only left man to himself and to his own free-will—he did not make him immutable. In this however there was no injustice on the part of God, because he was under no obligation to confer upon man such extraordinary assistance as should render him absolutely incapable of falling, because he was not solicited by man to bestow a larger measure of strength, and because, moreover, his justice itself required that man should be left to the freedom of his own will, for otherwise he could not have been the subject either of reward or of punishment. Man was a rational creature endued with liberty, and might therefore have exercised his freedom aright in not listening to the insinuations of Satan. The justice of God did not in this matter require that he should be deprived of his liberty but on the contrary that it should be entire. But the abuse of it originated with man himself—he alone was the cause of his own fall.

(*c.*) Nor does the fall of man reflect in the slightest degree on the *wisdom* of God, provided it be admitted that in permitting it he had certain ends in view. And no one can doubt this, though these ends may not be apparent to us. We know however that they were both direct and indirect.

(.) The *direct* end which he contemplated was the manifestation of his sovereignty and of his good pleasure regulated by wisdom which he exercises in governing man. But

(..) *Indirectly* he intended by allowing the fall to happen to open up another scene in which his perfections might be more gloriously displayed. And therefore he decreed that it should happen, that is, he permitted it in order that there might be an opportunity for the manifestation of his other perfections in the economy of grace.

(*d.*) The *goodness* of God would have been affected by the fall

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if he had permitted it with the intention of consigning man to destruction. But this is inconsistent with his character. He did not call man into being for such a purpose as this, but with the design, as the apostle says, that, after man was concluded in sin, God might have mercy upon him, (Rom. xi. 32)—that an opportunity might be given him, such as we have in the covenant of grace, of manifesting his goodness.

Still it will be said that God decreed the fall. This we admit, but not that he was the efficient cause of it. He did not decree it of his own good pleasure, because he wished to inflict punishment upon man, but he did so because he foresaw that man would fall, and because, for wise reasons, he did not choose to prevent it.* By this decree, no doubt, it happened necessarily; but it was necessary not because he decreed it, but because he would not hinder it. This necessity lay in the very nature of the thing, in the nature of the divine foreknowledge. Nor does it infringe in any degree upon the liberty of man, for he did not sin by necessity but because he chose to do so, and because he willingly listened to the temptations of Satan. The whole blame, therefore, lies with man himself. No charge can be brought against the providence of God.

CHAPTER XXIX.

SIN AND ITS CONSEQUENCES.

SIN CONSIDERED ABSTRACTLY—WHAT IT IMPLIES—DIFFERENT KINDS OF LAW—MATTER AND FORM OF SIN—NATURE OF A SIN OF COMMISSION—DIFFERENT VIEWS—PROVED TO BE AN ACT CONTRARY TO LAW—OBJECTIONS CONSIDERED—ARE UNFINISHED PURPOSES TO SIN IN THE REGENERATE OF THE NATURE OF SIN?—ATTRIBUTES OF SIN—EFFECTS OF SIN, CORRUPTION OR DEPRAVITY—CONDEMNATION AND PUNISHMENT—ETERNITY OF FUTURE PUNISHMENTS—TEMPORAL EVILS—PUNITIVE, CORRECTIVE, CASTIGATORY, AND TENTATIVE.

B. We come now to treat of the consequences or effects of the fall, or of that condition of sin in which by the fall the world was involved.

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* Diversimode autem lapsus potest cadere sub Dei providentiam; vel ratione *præscientiæ*, quia illum præscivit infallibiliter vel ratione *decreti*, quia decrevit futuritionem im-

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For thus the apostle speaks. "By one man sin entered into the world," &c., Rom. v. 12. In discussing this subject, then, we shall consider sin

ℵ *Abstractly* or apart from those in whom it is found and

ב *Concretely* or in respect of those in whom it exists—both of the first man and of all his posterity.

ℵ Considered *abstractly* sin has reference to a law, for "where no law is *there is* no transgression," Rom. iv. 15; and sin consists in this, that by it a law is violated. It is necessary therefore, that we premise somewhat in explanation of the law in order that we may give the better explanation of sin.

A law is the mandate of a superior in which some injunction or prohibition is laid upon an inferior and sanctioned by rewards or punishments. The idea of a law therefore includes the following things.

1. A *superior*, who is considered as lord and on whom an inferior depends. For the right to command or forbid is based not simply on the circumstance of an individual's being higher in rank and more excellent in character than another, but on his being the source of dependence to those who are beneath him.

2. An *inferior*, who is considered as in a state of subjection, but who at the same time is endued with freedom and with power necessary to enable him to keep the law. These two requisites must be always kept in mind. The one is liberty, without which there can be no law, no reward, and no punishment, for then man would be by nature impelled to act in a certain way by a necessity like that by which the inferior animals are actuated. The other is the possession of power necessary to enable him to obey the law. For if he had not such power, he obviously would have a pretext to plead for breaking the law, and it would be injustice to exact from him what he was incapable of rendering. Nor would he be a wise legislator who should enact a law with the design that it should be transgressed and that the transgressor should be punished. And yet this would follow, if the law exceeded the power of those who were placed in subjection to it. This, however, does not apply to the condition of the first man, for, when he received the law from God, he had not weakened or destroyed the power with which God had furnished him.

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mutabiliter, vel ratione *permissionis* actualis in tempore, quia permisit fieri liberrime et direxit sapientissime." Turret. Instit. Theol. Elenc. vol. i. loc. ix. quæst. vii. t. 13. Lowe, Edinb. 1847.

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3. The *publication of the will of the superior* in regard to the inferior. Hence the law is called his *edict* because it must be known by the subject; otherwise he would have an excuse for disobedience, nor could his violation of it be followed by punishment. This is agreeable at once to the word of God and to the dictates of our own minds.

4. *The sanction of the law by rewards and punishments,* not for the purpose of establishing obligation on the part of the inferior; for that obligation arises out of the relation in which he stands to the superior and does not depend either on promises or on threatenings, but for the purpose of urging him to greater promptitude in obeying the law. This is the design of the sanctions by which the law is enforced.

There are moreover various kinds of law.

1. In respect to the will of the lawgiver it is divided into *preceptive* and *prohibitory*—the former enjoining that something be done —the latter, that that something be omitted or not done. Hence arises the distinction of sins, as we shall afterwards see, into those of commission and omission.

2. In reference to the lawgiver, laws are distinguished into *divine* and *human,* according as they are enjoined by the authority of God or of man. This distinction is manifest enough and not attended with any difficulty. Human laws have a binding power if they are not in opposition to those of God.

3. In respect to the reasons by which the legislature is actuated, laws are distinguished into *necessary* and *arbitrary. Necessary* laws are those which are based upon the natural and necessary relations subsisting between God and man or between men themselves — such as the law of love to God and to our neighbour. *Arbitrary* laws again are those which have for their foundation the good pleasure and free will of the legislator—good pleasure and free will, however, which are characterised by wisdom, and which should be regarded by us as sufficient although we do not always know the reasons which prompted him to enact them. Such laws are not *necessary,* because they relate to matters indifferent which in other circumstances may be either done or not done. But for certain reasons they are wont to be imposed—such as those which related to the ceremonies under the Mosaic dispensation.

4. In respect to internal properties laws are divided into *just* and *unjust. Just* laws are those which are enjoined by one invested with rightful authority, which do not exceed the powers of those who are

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subject to them, and which are characterised by just relations, and sanctioned by just rewards and punishments. *Unjust* laws are in all these respects the very reverse.

With these preliminary remarks we are in a better condition to treat of sin. For sin has reference to a law, and what is *formal* in sin depends entirely upon law, for "where no law is *there is* no transgression"—no sin, Rom. v. 15. There was no sin in the world until law was given, for sin is not imputed where there is no law, Rom. v. 13.

Now as sin is a violation in reference to a law, it cannot be defined otherwise than as either an act or an omission contrary to law; so that every sin implies opposition to law, and this constitutes the *form* of sin. But sins differ in regard to their matter or substance, inasmuch as they are in opposition to a law which either enjoins or forbids. And hence arises a distinction to which we shall immediately advert. In order then more clearly to understand the nature of sin let us distinguish between its form or τὸ *formale* and its substance or τὸ *materiale;* for as in every other subject these two things should in this case be attended to. By the τὸ *formale* we mean that on account of which a thing is what it is; by the τὸ *materiale* that which it is and concerning which something is predicated.

The τὸ *formale* of sin consists in its being opposition to law, either preceptive or prohibitory. The law is a rule to which our actions should be conformed, and therefore that which is agreeable to the law is good, and that which is contrary to the law is evil and consequently is sin. Sin accordingly is *formally* nothing else than opposition to law. It is usually called also want of conformity to the law, *rebellion*. An apostle styles it ἀνομίαν because its resists and deviates from the law, 1 John iii. 4. This is sufficiently plain.

The τὸ *materiale* of sin again is that which sin is and concerning which something is predicated. But what in reference to sin is this? It is as we have already said either not obeying or acting contrary to law, according as that law enjoins or forbids. Hence arises the distinction of sins into those of omission and commission.

A sin of omission is not an act contrary to law—a sin of commission is.

The former is a sin the τὸ *materiale* of which is the not doing what a law enjoins. Such a law commands that something be done and therefore it is opposed when that something is not done. A sin of omission is thus the non-performance of what the law requires. Although this non-performance be sometimes in the form of an act

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seeing that it is by a direct exercise of the will that an individual refuses to do what the law requires, yet the τὸ *materiale* of a sin of omission is always the not doing, not in an absolute sense but relatively to the law.

The latter again is a sin the τὸ *materiale* of which consists in its being an act in opposition to a law, because it is committed against a law which forbids. Such a law is undoubtedly violated by the doing of that which it prohibits, and it is this doing accordingly which constitutes the matter or substance of a sin of commission. And such a sin man perpetrated.

We have thus a clear idea of sin and of its nature in regard both to its form and substance—the one consisting in its being, what every sin is, contrary to law—and the other in its being a doing or not doing according as the law which is violated enjoins or forbids, which constitutes the only difference between a sin of commission and omission. With this idea of sin we should rest satisfied.

But theologians, having heard of a theory by scholastic philosophers, have on this subject caused considerable trouble, by discussing a subtle metaphysical question regarding the nature of sin—whether, namely, it comprehend the τὸ *materiale* as well as the τὸ *formale*, or whether it be in its nature only rebellion in an abstract sense or also rebellion in act.

The schoolmen, who have done theologians so much injury that they are not yet entirely free from debating on trifles, supposed the nature of sin to consist in its being mere rebellion or opposition to law. But seeing that this rebellion is an abstract idea (for it cannot be separated except in imagination from an act in direct contrariety to the law) they hence held it to be an abstraction. And seeing that an abstraction exists only in the mind, not in reality, and therefore considered in itself is nothing, they therefore said that it was nothing. But as nothing has no qualities they would not call it so absolutely but privatively, in relation that is to say to the uprightness which should have been in man. And as nothing has no cause, they said that sin has not an efficient but only a deficient cause—a cause namely that consisted in the want of the uprightness that was required. The object of all this subtle disquisition was to prove that although God be the cause of every action, he is not the cause of sin. As the schoolmen explained the co-operation (*concursus*) of God in such a way as to make him the efficient cause of every action, and as, if sin be an action, he might then be said to be the author of sin, divines, for the purpose of escaping this awkward con-

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clusion, instituted this subtle distinction, *that God is the author of an action as a whole and yet is not the author of sin, because sin in its own nature is not an act but only the privation of uprightness, a privation which resides in man alone and has not an efficient but deficient cause.* God is thus not the cause of sin because he is not the cause of negative uprightness and of nothing. Yet as uprightness wholly pertains to action, and as in sin opposition and rebellion cannot be separated from action except by abstraction, he who is the cause of sin must also be the cause of the act of wickedness and rebellion.

Hence some take refuge in the notion that God is above law, and therefore may be the cause of an act as a whole without being the cause of sin, because the wickedness has reference not to him but to man. The law is given not to him but to man—a wicked action is one which opposes the law; but the law has reference not to God but to man and therefore in reference to God the action is not wicked. But they themselves thus destroy the distinction between a wicked action and pravity or sin, for, apart from this subtle distinction, it may be said distinctly and without disguise that God may cause sin in us and yet be without sin because he is above the law. But this opinion besides opposes the holiness and justice of God. The law indeed is not enjoined upon him, but he is a law to himself, for he cannot deny himself, and therefore can do nothing in which there is a denial of his perfections, not to mention now that, when the question is regarding him as the efficient cause in us, the distinction is nothing at all to the purpose—that God, namely, is above the law, and that we are in subjection to the law. For when it is denied that he is the cause of sin, it is meant by this that he does not produce sin only in respect of himself but also in respect of ourselves. And therefore he might be said not to produce sin in us, for then sin would not be sin unless it were so in respect of God. Thus the distinction has no tendency to preserve entire the co-operation of God, as we have already observed in treating of that subject.

But let us consider the subject a little more minutely, and to the better understanding of it let us first determine the state of the question.

(.) The question is not whether the τὸ *formale* of sin be rebellion or opposition to the law; for this is evident enough from what has been said, and is admitted by all. For the τὸ *formale* of a thing is that on account of which any thing is, and this in sin is contrariety to the law. But the question is, whether the nature of sin require nothing

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besides this, whether an action does not equally pertain to the form of sin.

(..) The question is not whether sin considered abstractly be rebellion, for this none deny. For if sin be abstracted from the act, it is nothing else considered by itself than opposition to the law. But the question is whether this abstraction be sufficient to constitute the nature of sin—whether a sin of commission be, in its own nature and in its own idea, nothing more than an abstraction. This we deny, and hold that it is something concrete, for there is required an act contrary to the law.

(.·.) The question is not whether the pravity of sin may be separated in imagination from a wicked action, for this all agree may be done. But the question is whether the pravity may be really separable from the wicked act, whether there be one cause of the wicked act, and another cause of the pravity itself, and whether the nature of sin depend upon a mental abstraction. This we deny.

(::) The question, moreover, is not whether the wickedness of an action may be separated from acts in general, for this may be done when the law does not forbid. For instance, the executioner and the robber put a man to death; but in the former it is not a wicked action, whereas in the latter it is, because of its being contrary to the law. But the question is whether the pravity of an action that is forbidden, and that is opposed to the law, can be separated from the action itself. For otherwise homicide may be good when it is according to law; but, a law having been given which forbids it, it is unquestionably not rebellion simply but an action contrary to the law.

The state of the question being thus determined, let us in the first place inquire into the nature of a sin of commission. The opinion held by the schoolmen is regarded by many as satisfactory, that the nature of sin, namely, consists of rebellion abstractly considered and of the privation of the uprightness which is required in man, and is something separable from the action. We prefer, however, the opinion, that the nature of sin, and especially of a sin of commission, consists in its being an action opposed to the law, and is thus something inseparable from the action itself. This we say seems to us the sounder opinion, and for the following reasons.

1. That which, when admitted or denied, constitutes or destroys any thing—that, we say, enters into the nature of the thing and is inseparable from it. Now, granted an action contrary to law in a sin of commission, sin itself is granted—let it be denied, and sin is de-

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nied. It belongs therefore to the nature of sin and cannot be separated from it. The major proposition is in itself sufficiently intelligible and commands our assent, for on it the essence of a thing depends. The minor proposition also cannot be denied, for the difference between a sin of omission and commission consists in this, that the latter is an action contrary to the law—take away the action and we take away the sin ; grant the action and we admit the sin ; and therefore the action must enter into the nature of such a sin and be inseparable from it.

2. That which cannot be perceived and separated from a thing, except by abstraction, belongs to the nature of that thing and is inseparable from it. Now pravity or rebellion cannot be perceived and separated save in this way, and therefore it enters into the nature of sin and cannot be disjoined from it. The minor proposition is self-evident, for according to our opponents the nature of sin lies in an abstraction. But in this very way it is proved that it belongs to its nature and cannot really be separated from it. The major proposition is also an established truth. For that which requires the aid of abstraction really pertains to the nature of a thing and is inseparable from it, because otherwise there would be no need of abstraction in order to make that separation.

3. That which consists in relation alone cannot constitute the nature of a thing, and requires something to which it is related, and from which it is inseparable. But the pravity of sin is merely relation to a law to which it is opposed. This relation therefore cannot constitute the nature of sin. There is required an action having reference to the law, and something that is inseparable from that action. It is admitted and is self-evident, that pravity in itself is sin. For if it were not contrary to the law, it would not be sin. The law is the standard, conformity to which is good, and opposition to which is evil. Pravity therefore depends only upon its relation to the law, and thus according to our opponents the minor proposition is true. This relation however cannot constitute the nature of a thing, there is required an action which is either good or bad, according to its conformity or opposition to the law. This also is required to constitute the nature of sin—relation in act, namely. Pravity is inseparable from an action placed in this relation—it is itself a relation to the law to which it is opposed. Grant that the action is contrary in that relation, then it cannot be separated from its pravity, because the pravity is itself a relation.

4. An abstraction has no subsistence, and no qualities and effects.

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But sin has both, and therefore it cannot in its nature be an abstraction. The major proposition is evident, for an abstraction is something separated from the subject, and by itself is nothing, and then it must be held that sin is a nonentity without qualities and effects.

5. The nature of sin corresponds to the nature of virtue. But virtue in its own nature is not abstract but concrete, for it is a habit or an action agreeable to law. Therefore neither is sin an abstraction, and mere pravity or rebellion. For virtue and vice have this in common, that the nature of both consists in their relation to a law, that relation being one either of conformity or of opposition. That which constitutes virtue is nothing else than the conformity of an action to law, and therefore that which constitutes vice is nothing else than the contrariety of an action to law. They are both the same accordingly in respect of relation. Now if the nature of sin be pravity or rebellion merely, then the nature of virtue also is that uprightness alone which is conformity to law. But the nature and idea of virtue require an action which is agreeable to law, otherwise it will also be nothing just as vice is, which all however deny. For on the hypothesis of our opponents God is the author and efficient cause of virtue. But he cannot be the cause of nothing. Sin, therefore, must be held to be not merely opposition to law, but an action also standing in such a relation.

6. There must be in every thing both the substance and the form and so likewise in sin. Such is the doctrine of all logicians and such the nature of a thing requires. Now what is the form of a thing?—that on account of which it is. What is its substance?—that which it is. There must therefore be in a thing that on account of which it is as well as that which it is—the τὸ *formale* of a thing can not constitute the whole of that thing and its nature—there is required also the τὸ *materiale*. For if we call a thing that which it is, then there must be a certain thing of which we affirm this—which is the τὸ *materiale* of that thing. It must therefore be shewn that in sin also there is the τὸ *formale* and the τὸ *materiale*. What is the former of these? It is opposition to law, because on account of that opposition it is sin. Where then is the τὸ *materiale*? It can be nothing else in a sin of commission than an action contrary to the law. As therefore both of these equally belong to a thing, both must enter into the nature of sin—an action contrary to law as well as rebellion and opposition.

We conclude accordingly that the nature of a sin of commission cannot be held to be rebellion alone and opposition to a law or an

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abstraction or a privative nothing, but that there is required also an action contrary to that law.

Let us consider some of the objections that have been urged against this view of the subject.

(*a.*) Scripture, it has been said, in describing sin, makes use of abstract words and phrases, such as *ἁμαρτία*, *ἀνομία*, which therefore must imply that sin in its nature is abstract.

This is strange reasoning. (.) If Scripture calls a man human nature, are we to understand from this that a man is not a man? (..) When it speaks of the humanity of Christ, are we to infer from this that Christ is no more than man? Writers of every description employ abstract terms, but surely we are not to conclude that the nature of the thing of which they write consists in its being merely an abstraction. But (∴) We hold that these terms are employed abstractedly not from an act but only from the subject. Let this be carefully observed. Scripture makes use of abstract expressions, but these must be understood as referring only to the subject in whom the quality is found. In this sense also it employs abstract terms concerning sin, but these certainly do not bear upon the present question, because we are speaking now of abstraction from an act. Sin, however, is not an abstraction of this kind, and Scripture never separates pravity from the act.

(*b.*) A certain thing, it has been said again, is sin, because it is opposition to law and is not sin because it is not in opposition to law, and therefore it is concluded that the nature of sin consists in its being rebellion. The conclusion which should have been come to is rather this, that the *τὸ formale* but not the whole of sin consists in rebellion. A certain thing is sin because it is contrary to law, if the question be regarding the *τὸ formale* of sin, and this is the only view in which the affirmation may be made. But it does not thence follow that the nature of sin consists in its being mere rebellion. That nature embraces also the *τὸ materiale* of sin or the pravity of the act.

(*c.*) Every act is good, therefore an act is not essential to the nature of sin.

Every act, we reply, is good, considered in itself apart from its relation to law and in the absence of all law. But we are speaking now of such relation, and the question therefore is whether an act be good which is contrary to law. This we deny.

But every act, it is said, is from God, and therefore must be good; otherwise God would be the cause of sin. We deny, however, that

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every act is from God. Lust is not of the Father, 1 John ii. 16. A sin of commission is our own act, not God's. All that he does regarding it, as we saw when treating of his providence, is his permitting and directing it.

Another question in regard to the nature of sin is this. Are inclinations or motions to sin as they are called in renewed persons, who at the same time do not purpose to sin, to be viewed in the light of sin? And do they belong to the nature of sin? Here let it be particularly observed

(.) That the question is not concerning those speculative notions which an individual entertains regarding sin or concerning his making it the subject of meditation, for this it is universally admitted has nothing in common with sin.

(..) That the question is not concerning the purpose to sin in one form or another, for all allow that such a purpose is sin.

(∴) That the question is not concerning those who are unrenewed, inasmuch as their thoughts proceed from a corrupt principle, and therefore are part of that sin which dwells in them, but concerning those who have been born again. The question therefore is regarding those inclinations which an individual feels to commit sin, in which he takes pleasure, and which, though not amounting to a finished purpose, yet consist in a desire to do what is evil if the law allowed him. The question then is whether these unfinished inclinations or purposes are sins?

On this question we differ from Papists who hold that in regenerate and baptized persons they are not—that although inordinate desires remain in them as the effects of depravity, these are not sins properly so called. They are imperfect volitions in which an individual experiences some degree of desire or inducement to do what is bad.

Papists, as we have said, maintain that in regenerated and baptized persons these inclinations are the effects of depravity, but not properly sins, and that in such persons they rather furnish matter for the trial and exercise of their virtue. Their object in holding this opinion is to defend their doctrine regarding works of supererogation, which a man may perform although he be liable to such inclinations as these.

In our opinion a distinction must be drawn between inclinations less wayward and obstinate and those which are more so.

(*a.*) In regard to those volitions of inordinate desire, lust, ambition, avarice, which steal imperceptibly upon the mind, but to which

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the mind is opposed, which awaken feelings of sorrow, and in regard to which resistance is made to get rid of them—such volitions, we say, which spring up in the mind in this way and which at their first movement cause a certain degree of remonstrance and provocation, disturb the conscience, and beget feelings of shame, are sins of infirmity, but are not sins properly so called, are not deserving of punishment, and are not imputed to a man.

(.) Because they certainly do not belong to that lust which in the language of Scripture *conceives*, James i. 15. For so far is the mind from conceiving them that it rather resists and repels them.

(..) Because they arise in the mind in opposition to the will. Now as sin properly consists in the perfect or imperfect consent of the will, they cannot rightly speaking be called sins.

(∴) They cannot moreover be called sins, because sin is committed in the heart—it has its seat more or less firmly there, Matt. v. 28. But the volitions of which we now speak are not in the heart, they do not meet with the consent of the will and therefore cannot be regarded as sins.

(*b*.) On the other hand volitions of the latter kind—those namely on which the mind dwells and meditates, and in which it finds pleasure, so as to grieve because it cannot carry them into effect, and which moreover receive the assent of the will although there may not be the settled purpose to commit sin—volitions of this kind, although different in degree from sins actually committed or proposed to be committed, are nevertheless sins properly so called and bring in a man guilty before God.

(.) Because they have the willing consent of the mind. An individual tacitly allows them place in his thoughts, delights to dwell upon them, and in so doing willingly entertains them.

(..) Christ calls adultery in thought sin, Matt. v. 28—where he speaks not of a settled purpose to commit the sin, but only of sin similar in kind to the desires or volitions of which we are now speaking.

(∴) The apostle tells us that he did not know that lust was sin, Rom. vii. 7. He does not certainly mean by lust a settled purpose, for that, as he might have known, is expressly contrary to the law. But he means the first motions or stirrings of lust, or the froward desires which he felt especially while he was yet a Jew.

(::) These volitions are opposed to the love of God and of our neighbour, and are therefore sins. For the love of God requires the submission of the whole heart and mind. We must therefore will

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nothing which is not subordinate to that love, nothing which is opposed to it and to the love of our neighbour.

(::) Moreover, "lust when it hath conceived, bringeth forth sin," James i. 15. The Apostle is speaking not of a settled determination but of desire taking possession of the mind, remaining gradually increasing there, and at length giving birth to sin. For he says that it "bringeth forth sin"—meaning by "sin" the external act—that which is without the man. Now just because the actual sin is contained in the womb of lust, the lust in the mind must be sin; for we cannot call the tree good which produces bad fruit.

Let us now attend to the *attributes* of sin, in order that we more clearly see its vileness and be deterred all the more strongly from committing it. For this purpose

1. We shall examine the names which Scripture employs in describing it.
2. We shall consider the properties or attributes of sin.

1. The names by which sin is expressed in Scripture are various. There are three, however, in particular, most frequently used and sometimes interchanged.

חטאה properly signifies sin in relation to the law as the way which leads to happiness, and thus implies that it is a departure from that happiness and a transgression of the law which leads to it. The word properly denotes a deviation from a purpose, inasmuch as it is a transgression of the law in the observance of which happiness is to be obtained. This departure from our happiness, therefore, by breaking the law, is properly sin, because the observance of the law is the way in which that happiness is to be attained. But carnal desire in particular is called by the same name, because it diverts man from the end which the law proposes, that is, his happiness, and leads him to seek it in the objects of the world, so that it deserves emphatically to be called a going aside from the right way. The Greek word *ἁμαρτία* denotes the same thing.

פשע signifies sin in relation to the law as the sign of our dependence upon God, and of our subjection to his authority, and thus means a denial on our part of that dependence, and a resistance of that authority. For the word implies revolt from God as our Lord and master, and consequently a spurning at his law as the sign of his right to rule over us and of our dependence upon him. To this law sin is directly opposed, and hence it is called defection or revolt. It is called also apostacy, for it is a shaking ourselves free from the law of God. The Greek word having this meaning is *ἀνομία*.

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עון is another name given to sin in relation to the law as just and good, and denotes a transgression of the law as such, and thus whatever is unequal, unjust, and wicked. It is called particularly iniquity, unrighteousness, wrong. From these names we may attain a knowledge of the vileness and wickedness of sin, inasmuch as it is a deviation from the way that leads to happiness—a revolting from the authority of God, and a transgression of a just and righteous law.

2. But its vileness and wickedness will be more clearly seen if we consider its *properties* or *attributes*, and the judgment and feelings with which God regards it.

Let us look at them in reference to the relations in which God stands to us. View him (.) As an infinitely perfect being and what then is sin? It is the want of resemblance to him, the privation of his glory and of his moral perfection. It is the obscuration of the divine image in which man was at first created. It is the denial of God as such, inasmuch as man by sinning shews that he does not acknowledge him as holy, just, and good, but that he regards him as a being like himself, Ps. l. 21. It is a failing to fulfil the end which God had in view in creating him, that is, the manifestation of his own glory and perfection, so that in creating man he seems if we may so speak to fail in attaining that end. View him again (..) As our sovereign, rightful, and beneficent Lord, and what then is sin? It is certainly disobedience, a denial of his authority, a violation of his law as the sign of our dependence, and therefore a disowning of that dependence, and a transgression of that law as holy, just, and good. It is moreover subjection to another master—to a tyrant who is actuated by hatred towards us; because when man sinned he shook off his allegiance to God and chose to do homage to another, that is Satan, the world, and the flesh. But view God moreover (∴) As our chief good, and what aspect does sin present? It is the forfeiture of our supreme happiness and the denial of God as our highest good, because by sinning we substitute another in his place. It is besides a barrier in the way of his presenting himself to us as such. It is casting dishonour upon him in this light, because things of no importance such as those of this world are esteemed in preference to him. It were easy to enlarge upon these topics, but we forbear.

Let us consider also the judgment and the feelings with which God regards sin. We have sufficient evidence of these in his law, in the sentence which he has passed upon sinners, and in the threatenings which he has denounced against them, but above all in the sufferings which our Lord endured because of sin, and by which God

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manifested his unalterable hatred of it, and his inflexible determination to punish it.

The *effects* of sin may be ranked under three heads,

1. Depravity,
2. Condemnation, and
3. Punishment.

1. *Depravity* is spoken of in Scripture under a variety of expressions. Man is there represented as stained and defiled by sin, as having become unclean. Sin is compared to "filthy rags," "we are all as an unclean thing," Is. lxiv. 6. It is said to defile a man, Matt. xv. 11; Tit. i. 15; Rom. iii. 12–16. This depravity may be viewed *negatively* and *positively*. *Negatively* it consists in the loss of original comeliness, or of the image and glory of God, Rom. iii. 23. It is called the privation of that moral uprightness which so becomes our soul, and reason, and conscience. In a *positive* sense it consists in moral corruption, inasmuch as all our faculties are depraved and by sin have lost their natural condition and order.

Now the consequence of this depravity is hatred or abhorrence on the part of God and of all holy beings, as God himself declares, Ps. v. 6, 7; Prov. iii. 32; and shame or confusion on the part of the sinner, Dan. ix. 8; Rom. vi. 21;—shame in having lost his natural comeliness, in having acted in opposition to God, in having deformed his reason, and in having sold himself to sin and carnal desire. Such is the corruption of sin, the depravation namely of both the soul and body of man.

2. Another effect of sin is *condemnation* or the obligation to suffer punishment. This condemnation is distinguished into *remote* or *potential* and *immediate* or *actual*.

Remote or *potential* condemnation is that which follows and is inseparable from sin, and means an obligation arising from sin to suffer penal evil. "They which commit such things are worthy of death," Rom. i. 32.

But there is also *immediate* and *actual* condemnation, which means an obligation to suffer after the sentence has been pronounced by the judge, and then because the sinner is devoted and delivered over to punishment he must actually endure the penalty to which the judge has condemned him. Condemnation in this sense may be separated from sin, as in the case of all who repent and believe for the sake of Christ and by the grace of him who forgives their sins. Hence it is said, "there is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus," Rom. viii. 1. Although they be sinners

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in a *remote* or *potential* sense they are not so *immediately* and *actually*, because they are delivered from the actual obligation to suffer punishment.

Papists make another distinction here—the distinction, namely, between what they call *reatum culpæ* and *reatum pœnæ, i. e. the guilt of the fault* and *the guilt of the punishment.* By the latter they understand the obligation to endure evils in the way of penalty and satisfaction either in this life or in purgatory. For they hold that a man may be delivered from the *reatus culpæ* while the *reatus pœnæ* remains, that he may be exempted from condemnation to eternal death, while yet he may be condemned to suffer for his sins either in the present life or by passing through purgatorial fires.*

This opinion, however, is inadmissible, whether we consider the terms in which it is stated or the opinion itself.

The terms certainly are exceedingly absurd and contradictory. *Reatus culpæ* and *reatus pœnæ* are so intimately connected, that the one can have no existence apart from the other. Take away the former and we of necessity remove also the latter, for where there is no *culpa* there can be no *pœna.*

But let us consider the opinion itself. It is true indeed that sore evils are sometimes inflicted even upon those whose sins are forgiven, as in the case of David, and upon inconsistent Christians who nevertheless are delivered from eternal punishment. These evils, however, are not, strictly speaking, penal in their character, much less an equivalent in the way of satisfaction. They are only chastisements inflicted for the purpose of restoring to the path of duty and of deterring others from sin. They are designed, moreover, as we shall afterwards see, to vindicate the holiness of God and to correct the sinner for despising him, 2 Sam. xii. 10, 14. It is still more absurd to say that these evils are to be endured in purgatory, for purgatory, as we shall see, is a pure fiction.

3. The punishment to which, in consequence of guilt, man is subject, comprehends every evil which is inflicted for the purpose of punishing it or of vindicating the justice of the lawgiver and judge, and is distinguished from the evil which is inflicted for the purpose

* "If any man shall say that after justification the fault is so remitted to a penitent sinner or that the guilt of eternal punishment is so blotted out, that there remains no guilt of temporal punishment to be endured in this life or in the future life in purgatory, before he can be admitted into the kingdom of heaven: let him be accursed." Concil. Trid. de Justificatione, Canon. xxx.

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of trial and not on account of sin. The punishment of sin is the evil that is inflicted directly by God on account of sin.

The evils which spring from sin are various and may be distinguished into

(*a.*) Those of loss and of sense,
(*b.*) Those of body and of soul, and
(*c.*) Those of time and of eternity.

(*a.*) There are evils of loss and of sense or what are called *pœna damni* and *pœna sensus*. The former of these consists in the loss or forfeiture of true happiness or of fellowship with God as the chief good, and consequently of all real peace and enjoyment.* Such is the effect of sin. For it produces a breach of friendship between God and man, Is. lix. 2. Light can have no communion with darkness, 2 Cor. vi. 14. But there are also the evils of sense or those painful feelings by which the body or soul is burdened and oppressed.

(*b.*) Bodily evil comprehends all that is inflicted upon the material part of our constitution and is of many various kinds. For it includes whatever appears to be attended with trouble and disgrace—whatever causes pain and torment, and specially diseases, bodily defects, and temporal death. Spiritual evils again are (.) Shame, Dan. ix. 8—the painful feeling awakened by reflecting upon the unseemliness and baseness of our conduct, and by considering the polluted condition into which we have brought ourselves. This feeling causes great uneasiness, because it expresses the consciousness which a man has of all the sins which he has committed; he knows that he has done wickedly in opposition to his own nature and dignity, and hence he is base and polluted in his own estimation. (..) Grief or sorrow for having involved himself in such a wretched condition. (∴) Self-condemnation, and the confession that the blame is entirely his own. Hence arises what we call a tormenting conscience. (::) Regret in having allowed himself to be brought into such a wretched condition—a wish that the thing had not happened—but a wish now too late. This gives birth to despair—the most distressful of all feelings, inasmuch as no hope of salvation is cherished—to dread of God, whom he avoids as a just and severe judge, and to a sense of his anger as such. The man is thus plunged in the deepest sorrow. It is evid-

* This loss or forfeiture was also called *pœna negativa*.

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ent therefore that sin which is attended with such consequences as these is the greatest of all evils.

(*c.*) Temporal evil is that to which man is exposed here, whether it relate to the soul or the body, whether it be the evil of loss or of sense. Every sinner experiences such evil in one form or other in the present life. Although he may seem now to enjoy some measure of happiness, and to have no uneasy feeling, he is yet in reality wretched, because he has no true happiness in God—he has not an approving conscience—he cannot take pleasure in himself,—his own heart condemns him. But this evil is not terminated here, it reaches forward to eternity. In the future world he will still be subject to it.

This is the place for adverting to the *eternity* of future punishments. That there are punishments after death is admitted by all who believe that man does not perish with the beasts. The very nature of the case requires that there should be; for there would be no manifestation of the divine justice if after this life sinners were not to be punished. For if they perish after death without undergoing punishment, they will in that case have no uneasiness nor trouble, and thus all distinction between holiness and sin would be destroyed, and God would not prove himself to be a righteous judge. Scripture also declares that rewards and punishments will be dispensed after death, as we shall see when we come to speak of the state of glory.

But this being certain, it is asked whether the punishments to be inflicted in the next world are eternal and will never come to a close. On this subject let us consult our two principles, namely,

1. Scripture and
2. Reason.

1. In regard to Scripture we must acquiesce in what it plainly teaches on this subject. It nowhere says that future punishment will be temporary in its duration—it distinctly affirms that it will be eternal, and we must take the word eternal in its ordinary acceptation. It speaks of "everlasting fire" as well as of "life eternal," Matt. xxv. 41, 46. Now as the life has no end, unquestionably the fire also must be understood as having none. Besides, Scripture says that the "worm dieth not and the fire is not quenched," Mark ix. 44. It tells us in regard to Judas that "it had been good for" him "if he had not been born," Matt. xxvi. 24—a proof that his punishment would never come to a close. We must rest satisfied therefore with this plainly revealed doctrine of Scripture.

2. But does reason also prove or does it refute this doctrine?

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Mere reason can furnish no argument in proof of the eternity of future punishments. We may demonstrate from it that God is infinite and that his majesty is supreme, and then try to shew that sin being an offence against such a Being and such majesty is deserving of endless punishment. But we do not think that the infinite greatness of God furnishes a sufficient proof of this point, or that it is a rule by which we are to judge of the heinousness of sin or of the eternal duration of punishments.

(.) If the infinite majesty of God be a standard by which we are to estimate the character of sins, then it would follow that in point of aggravation and atrocity they are all on precisely the same footing, and that all degrees both of sin and of the punishment inflicted upon it are done away. For when the standard by which they are tried is the same, their aggravation also must be the same. There are certainly no degrees in what is infinite, such as the majesty of God is. And therefore if punishments are to be estimated according to this standard, they must all be equally severe, which however we know is not the case.

(..) The dignity of the person against whom sins are committed cannot be taken into account, unless these sins aim directly at him and his majesty and are deliberately committed with such an aim. In that case we may take into consideration the majesty and dignity of him who is thus sinned against. For unquestionably he is chargeable with a more heinous offence who sins against a king than he who sins against a person of low estate. And therefore in the present case sins must aim directly at God and his majesty. But there are few if any sins of this description. They are a transgression indeed of his law, but the law is broken not with a direct intention against God, but from carnal desire and other principles. The dignity of the person therefore cannot be a general rule for determining the eternity of punishments.

(∴) The dignity of the person no doubt aggravates a sin, considered not in itself and absolutely, but in reference and agreeably to the nature of those who sin, to the principles by which they are actuated in sinning, and to the continuance of their sins. These must be attended to in estimating their offences, the heinousness of which is proportioned to the dignity of the person against whom they are committed. But if the relations which we have just mentioned be preserved entire, the continuance of sins is no ground for concluding that they will be visited with everlasting punishment because of the infinite dignity of the person sinned against—for they are transitory

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acts. And hence it is plain that that dignity cannot be the rule by which punishments are to be awarded.

(::) The dignity of the person is taken into account not as he is in himself but in his relation to us. For God deals with us not as an infinite Being but as standing in certain relations to us particularly as sinners and his subjects, and accordingly we must look upon his dignity as that of a lawgiver. Now sin is a violation of his dignity in this relation, inasmuch as he so to speak comes down to us. The dignity of God indeed is supreme, but his dignity as a lawgiver is not infinite,—it consists only in his observing a due proportion between sins and their punishment. This we call his legislative justice.

(:·:) Sins are estimated and rightly so according to greater or less obligation. Now obligation springs from the benefits which God has bestowed, from the relations in which he stands to us, from the powers with which he has endowed the creatures, and from other similar principles. And therefore, when treating of punishment,we are to take into account not his infinite majesty but the blessings with which he has enriched us, according as these are greater or less. We are of opinion accordingly that the eternity of punishments is a doctrine which cannot be deduced from or established by reason.

But can this doctrine be refuted by reason? We answer that it cannot, provided it be granted that sins continue for ever after death, which we here assume, and which is the only foundation on which the eternity of punishment rests. Now where sins remain, there also are punishments. The two are as intimately connected as an evil conscience and sin, and Scripture represents men after death as continuing in sin.

But although all the evils of which we have been speaking have their origin in sin, they are not all inflicted on account of sin and as its punishment, but sometimes for other ends, such as to put to the test our hatred of sin and our love of virtue; and hence they are distinguished into *penal* and *tentative* or such as serve for trial.

Although all penal evils are inflicted on account of sin, yet they are not inflicted from the same principle and for the same end. For some are dispensed by God in the exercise of pure unmitigated justice and for the vindication of that attribute, and are hence called *punitive;* while others proceed from him as the just and at the same time long suffering governor of the world, in the exercise of justice indeed but of justice tempered with mercy, and with the view of keeping the world in subjection and of restraining sinners from becoming excessive in their enormities. These again are called *cor-*

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rective evils. A third class, moreover, proceed from him as a father, in the exercise of justice also, but of justice mixed with love, and with the view of weaning his people from the world and of rescuing them from destruction. These are called *chastisements.* We have accordingly evils of a threefold kind, *punitive,* namely, *corrective,* and *castigatory.* A word or two on each.

(*a.*) *Punitive* evils are so called because (.) They are inflicted by God considered simply as a righteous judge, "Shall not the Judge of all the earth do right?" Gen. xviii. 25. Hence the last day is called "the day of wrath and revelation of the righteous judgment of God," Rom. ii. 5. (..) Because they are inflicted in pure justice, from a desire to exercise that perfection, with a simple regard to the proportion between sin and its punishment, and without any moderation or any admixture of grace or mercy. (∴) Because they have for their object the manifestation and satisfaction of the divine justice, for as we have said there is simply a proportion observed between sin and its punishment. They are designed moreover for the eternal ruin of both body and soul, just as punishments are in the life to come.

(*b.*) *Corrective* evils differ from the former, and comprehend all the varied calamities which befal men in this life. (.) They are inflicted by God as the governor and judge of the universe, but in the exercise of long-suffering and kindness, because he willeth not the death of the sinner but rather that he should repent and live. (..) They proceed from the principle of justice indeed, lest that attribute should fall into contempt and suffer wrong, but justice is tempered with that long-suffering and kindness, in the exercise of which he governs a fallen world. And thus these evils have a general aspect. (∴) The end which is contemplated by the infliction of these is that the divine justice may be manifested, and at the same time that the transgressor may be arrested in his sinful career and brought or at least invited to repentance, and that others may be deterred from sinning—that human society in this way may be preserved entire and that wicked men may not wield too much authority and go to an excess in their outrages upon others. Although the divine judgments are not always followed by this effect, yet in many instances they do produce it. For when the "judgments" of God "*are* in the earth, the inhabitants of the world will learn righteousness," Is. xxvi. 9.

(*c.*) *Castigatory* evils or those which serve the purpose of chastening, are various and often also severe, and are visited upon believers and the children of God in the present life. Scripture makes frequent mention of them, and the apostle expressly says, "Whom the Lord

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loveth he chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom he receiveth," Heb. xii. 6. (.) They are inflicted by God as a father, but at the same time as a righteous father, who cannot suffer his name to be blasphemed, 2 Sam. xii. 14. Yet he inflicts them as a kind father who cannot allow his children to be "condemned with the world," 1 Cor. xi. 32. (..) They are inflicted in the exercise of the love which he entertains for his people. Just as a father affectionately administers chastisement to his children, so those whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth, Heb. xii. 6. Christ in like manner says to the church of the Laodiceans, "As many as I love I rebuke and chasten," Rev. iii. 19. (∴) They are inflicted in order that the name of God may be vindicated from blasphemy and contempt, and that believers may know themselves, turn from sin, reform, and not "be condemned with the world," 1 Cor. xi. 32. When his chastisements have this effect, they are accompanied with a spirit of compunction and penitence.

In addition to these, there are evils which are *tentative*, or which are inflicted for the purpose of trial. Although these no doubt are occasioned by sin, they are not designed as the punishment of sin, but rather as the means of trying believers, and of affording them matter for exercising their virtue and faith. They are inflicted on account of sin—of sin, namely, which is in the world; for if there were no sin they would have no existence—and also on account of the sin which is still in believers, in order that they may be led to examine themselves and be all the more deterred from it. They have this in common with penal evils, that they are afflictive in their nature; but they differ in this that they are not directly inflicted on account of sin and do not wear a punitive aspect. They are called afflictions sent for the purpose of exercising his people's faith, and comprehend a variety of evils which have reference to their bodies, and to the various conditions in which in this life they are placed, as the history of the church and of her martyrs shews. (.) These evils are inflicted by God as a wise and benevolent ruler, and at the same time as the guide, preserver, and governor of his church, who consults the welfare of his people, who wishes to have public proofs of their faith and constancy, and who sees to it that in this way the advancement and safety of the church are secured. (..) In inflicting these evils God is actuated by a regard for his own glory, and for the welfare of his church and of individual believers. This is evident from the designs which he has in view. (∴) These designs are *first* in respect of God himself, that the power of his grace may be seen in his people who remain firm when visited with these evils, bear them patiently and

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courageously, and devoutly ascribe their doing so to the grace and spirit of God, that the church may be built up, and extended, and increased, and that many may bear their afflictions with the constancy of the martyrs, whose blood, as the experience of all ages sufficiently proves, has been the seed of the church. These designs have reference, *secondly*, to believers themselves—that they may attain a more intimate knowledge of themselves, as sincerely and firmly adhering to faith, and piety, and the love of God, and as unable by these evils to be withdrawn from him, that they may have room for the exercise of their faith and constancy, and that they may be weaned the more from sin, cling the more closely to God, and attain a higher degree of glory when he shall render to every man according to his deeds. These designs have reference, *thirdly*, to the enemies of the church, to Satan and the world, that she may be rescued from their power, that all who oppose her may be put to shame and completely overcome (for although they may seem to triumph, they are in reality conquered by the constancy of her members who are afflicted) and that the kingdom of sin and Satan may be utterly destroyed.

From what has been said it is evident that these tentative evils are eminently serviceable, and in no degree unjust, seeing that God will assuredly amply recompense the afflictions of his people in the life to come. As evils are thus to be viewed in various lights, some being inflicted on account of sin, and others because of the existence of sin, it is plain that they are not all to be regarded as punishments. This holds true especially of tentative evils, seeing that they are inflicted not even on account of sin, and for other ends than as the punishment of sin. But even penal evils themselves do not always wear the aspect of punishment, properly so called, but only those which are punitive. And although corrective evils are strictly penal, they are nevertheless designed to reform, rather than to destroy the sinner, they proceed from the love which God bears to a sinful world and to sinful men, and therefore though they have the appearance of punishment, they also in a certain way tend to good, although they do not always attain this end.

But in regard to evils in the form of chastening, they have still less the appearance of punishment. Although they be penal they are yet designed for our benefit. Just as when a father chastises a wayward child, there is a certain appearance of punishment in the discipline administered, though in reality there is none, so the chastisements with which God visits his people proceed more from paternal love than from justice strictly so called, because he desires by means

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of these to advance their well-being and safety. They are in many cases accompanied moreover with the sense and experience of his fatherly affection, which sometimes lead those who are visited with them, even in the midst of their troubles, to kiss the hand that smites them.

These evils finally tend in particular to the safety of believers, that they "be not condemned with the world," and therefore are not penal properly so called. Hence it may be easily perceived that they are not at variance with the doctrine we hold regarding the satisfaction of Christ, and that the rod of chastisement is employed in entire consistency with the atoning work of him who has delivered his people from the punishment of sin, by bearing for them all that is really penal, and by making the evils which afflict them here no longer punitive but conducive to their good. They are only fatherly chastisements, designed to continue but for a season, and will terminate in the most salutary results.

CHAPTER XXX.

EFFECTS OF THE FALL.

CONDITION OF OUR FIRST PARENTS AFTER THE FALL—SENTENCE PRONOUNCED UPON THEM BY GOD—CONDITION OF THEIR POSTERITY—ORIGINAL SIN—PROOFS—ORIGIN, EXTENT, AND EXTERNAL EFFECTS OF MORAL DEPRAVITY—DIFFERENT KINDS OF SIN—SIN AGAINST THE HOLY GHOST—UNIVERSALITY OF MORAL DEPRAVITY EXPLAINED AND PROVED—NOT INCONSISTENT WITH OUR LIBERTY.

2. We come now to consider sin *concretely, i. e.* as its subsists in man as its subject, or as it subsisted

I. In our first parents and

II. As it subsists in their posterity.

I. In reference to our first parents we must attend to

1. The sinful condition into which they brought themselves by the fall and

2. The sentence pronounced upon them by God when in that condition.

1. If we examine the account given by Moses (Gen. iii.) we will find that their condition after the fall was

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(*a.*) One in which they lost all right to life and communion with God. Man previously enjoyed this right (as we shewed in a former chapter); but by sin he forfeited it. We have various proofs of this.

(.) Our first parents were driven from Paradise, and prevented from approaching the tree of life, lest they should put forth their hands and eat of it—thus shewing that by sin they had lost the right which they once had to do so.

(..) After the fall man was seized with dread when he heard God approaching and sought to avoid his presence. Formerly he had delighted in holding intercourse with his Creator, but now he fled from him with fear and trembling, and thus proved that he no longer had the privilege of a communion with God, but that a consciousness of guilt rendered his presence repulsive and terrible.

(∴) When he fell he became subject to Satan. This is plain from the terms in which the plan of redemption was first announced, "I will put enmity between thee and the woman," Gen. iii. 15. He was in bondage, therefore, to Satan's power, which is called "the power of death," Heb. ii. 14.

(::) That this was his condition was mystically and emblematically shewn by his nakedness which was accompanied with feelings of shame,*—the circumstance of his being so anxious to hide himself indicating on his part a consciousness of guilt. Nakedness is employed as an emblem to denote the forfeiture of the right to hold converse with God. Aaron, for instance, is said to have "made" the people of Israel "naked unto their shame," inasmuch as, by making the golden calf and setting it up as an object of worship, he had deprived them of the favour and protection of God, Exod. xxxii. 25. In like manner it is said that the church of Laodicea was "naked," as opposed to being clothed with the "white raiment," the robe of righteousness, Rev. iii. 17. But

(*b.*) Our first parents were not only deprived of the right to life and to communion with God, but they were also liable to miseries of every kind both in this world and in the world to come. Of this we have the following proofs.

(.) God had threatened all these miseries when he said "in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die;" and after the fall he sentenced man to the endurance of them, Gen. iii. 19.

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* Adam did not say, "I was ashamed" but "I was afraid because I was naked"—language leading us to infer that it was not bodily nakedness but nakedness of soul to which he alluded.

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(..) As we have already observed, man became the subject and slave of Satan and liable therefore to every evil; seeing that sin and Satan had the power of death. Moral evil was thus inseparably attended with every description of misery, and this man himself shewed when he fled in terror from the presence of God.

(*c.*) The condition in which man was placed after the fall was one of slavery to sin, inasmuch as he not only became chargeable with guilt, but sin exercised dominion over him and rendered him unable to attain spiritual life. This is evident if we consider

(.) That the fall was not a transitory act,* but was connected with complete alienation on the part of man from God. He substituted the world and sin in the place of God as his chief good—his affections became utterly estranged from God. This we shewed when speaking of the fall itself.

(..) That man was ashamed when he perceived his nakedness. He was naked indeed before the fall, but he felt no shame. After the fall he had a different feeling, and thus proved that he had a consciousness of guilt and depravity.

(∴) That he became the friend of Satan and therefore of the world and of sin. This is plain from the circumstance of God's declaring that he would put enmity between man and the serpent—a declaration implying that the fall had brought them into friendly terms with each other, terms which could be broken up only by him who was to cause the enmity.

(*d.*) The exceeding depravity of the condition into which man fell is evident from this, that he lost all his spiritual wisdom and prudence. The loss may be clearly inferred from what God himself says, "Behold the man is become as one of us knowing good and evil"—language which means nothing more than this—Satan has deceived man, who by eating of the forbidden fruit, now knows what good and evil are: only he is so far from having become like one of us that he is rather become a fool, and has lost the knowledge and wisdom with which he was endued, seeing that he is in reality a sinner.

Such was the sinful condition in which man was placed by the fall—a condition from which he had no power to extricate himself. His attempt to hide his nakedness with fig leaves is a clear intimation of this—an attempt which, as we shall see, God shewed to be utterly unavailing.

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* By a transitory act (actus transitorius) is meant one which has a beginning and an end, in contradistinction to original sin which in this life has no end.

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2. The sentence pronounced by God upon man in this condition was one not of rigid but of mitigated justice—of justice tempered with mercy. For it really and properly originated in his grace and in the love which he entertained for the sinner. He declared that he would inflict punishment in its utmost severity upon the author of sin, but that he would rescue man from his power, and that at the same time he would allow some marks of the fall to remain in the form of those temporal evils with which man would be visited. Such is a right view of the sentence which God pronounced.

(.) In respect of man it was a sentence of grace.

(..) It was a sentence in which justice also was manifested—God designing that some monuments of the fall should remain. For although man, as we have said, fell voluntarily into sin, yet as he fell by temptation and not of his own accord, and was at the same time weaker in nature than Satan, God in pronouncing the sentence made a wide distinction between the tempter and the tempted. When he condemned Satan to the place of woe, he had prepared for him everlasting fire. "Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared" not for man but "for the devil and his angels," Matt. xxv. 41. To men on the contrary he made known his gracious purpose regarding their restoration and their readmission into fellowship with himself, in such a way, however, that there should still be monuments of the fall in the form of evils inflicted not as a satisfaction but as corrections and chastisements. In this light we should consider the sentence pronounced upon Satan and upon fallen man. With the latter he did not deal according to his deserts, he did not rigidly exact the satisfaction due to his justice, but exercised his love and compassion and revealed his purpose of grace—of grace however modified and restricted in the manner to which we have already referred.

In as far as man was concerned we say the sentence was one of grace and compassion, inasmuch as it contained a promise of his restoration. This promise God made both

(*a.*) Indirectly and

(*b.*) Directly.

(*a.*) The promise was made *indirectly* when God thus condemned Satan, "Upon thy belly shalt thou go, and dust shalt thou eat all the days of thy life, Gen. iii. 14; *i. e.* thou shalt be for ever removed from the elevated position which thou didst once occupy and from the fellowship with God which thou didst once enjoy, and shalt be consigned to misery and be deprived of all comfort. This is the meaning of the

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expressions *to go upon the belly and to eat dust*—expressions taken from what is natural and peculiar to the serpent. Now that which was inflicted as a punishment upon him must be understood to refer to the condition of degradation and wretchedness in which he was placed. This is evident from the language of Scripture, Micah vii. 17. It was an irrevocable sentence "all the days of thy life," thou shalt never be restored to thine original condition. Our Lord represents this condition by the phrase "everlasting fire prepared for the devil and his angels." But in thus exacting the full claims of his justice from Satan God shewed indirectly that he purposed to deal graciously with man and to deliver him from the power of the tempter who was the primary cause of the fall and whose revolt was complete and irreparable.

(*b.*) This promise was made *directly* by the manner in which God said he would deal with man, "I will put enmity between thee and the woman," Gen. iii. 15,—a declaration implying that Satan would be deprived of the power which he had acquired over man by the fall, and by which he can bring him into condemnation and subject him to every kind of misery. If he should be deprived of this power, then by this very deprivation man would be restored to the possession and enjoyment of true happiness. In these words, therefore, God declared that it was his purpose to rescue fallen man from the grasp and power of his enemy. The words accordingly are to be regarded as intimating that a punishment was to be inflicted upon Satan, but that kindness at the same time was to be exercised toward man, whose salvation, as we shall afterwards see, consists in his being brought into a state of enmity with Satan. It is plain therefore that the sentence pronounced by God after the fall was fraught with mercy and salvation to man.

But we remarked that this sentence was not one of absolute unrestricted grace. In regard to the manner in which the restoration of man was to be effected, and his eternal happiness to be secured, this grace was to some extent restricted. For whereas before the fall he might have attained happiness in the entire absence of temporal evils, he could not do so after the fall except by experiencing in the present life many such evils which terminate in temporal death. These evils serve to prove that he is now in a fallen condition, but yet at the same time they are inflicted for the purpose of correction and not as a satisfaction for sin. Such is the view we should take of the evils which God denounced against our first parents.

To the man he said, "Cursed *is* the ground for thy sake; in sorrow

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shalt thou eat of it all the days of thy life. Thorns also and thistles shall it bring forth to thee," Gen. iii. 17, 18.

To the woman he said, " In sorrow thou shalt bring forth children, and thy desire shall be to thy husband and he shall rule over thee," Gen. iii. 16.

To both he said that they should return to the dust from which they were taken, that they should fall before the stroke of death.

The questions that have been asked,—whether for instance the woman would have brought children before the fall, and whether the earth produced no thorns—are idle and useless; for in the beginning all things were appointed by God so as to be subordinate to the fall which he foresaw would happen. Diseases, pains, and death, therefore, are marks and evidences of the fall. Such was the condition into which our first parents brought themselves by sin, in one respect a condition of wretchedness but, in another, one of happiness and joy, inasmuch as God in mercy shewed that he willed not the death of the sinner but rather that he should repent and live. The effects of their fall however were not confined to themselves, and therefore we shall now consider these as extending

II. To all their posterity in whom sin and its effects are seen. "By one man," Paul says, " sin entered into the world," Rom. v. 12. All men therefore share in the consequences of sin and of the fall; none are excepted who descend from Adam by ordinary generation. It is thus abundantly evident that, although Christ our Lord was man and the Son of Man, he did not belong to this class. For he was not a mere man, but God and man. He was not born according to the ordinary natural law, and therefore not descended from Adam by whom sin came into the world, for he was the " seed of the woman" and not of the man. He was besides, as well as Adam, created immediately by God. Moreover as Adam was the head of the human race, so Christ was the head of his people,—" as in Adam" the one "die; even so in Christ shall" the other " be made alive," 1 Cor. xv. 22, Christ alone being excepted as he must necessarily be. All men are in precisely the same condition and accordingly are involved in the fall of Adam and in its consequences.

Papists indeed say that the Virgin Mary also was exempt from this law.* But this is contrary to the opinion of the ancients and to Scripture itself.

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* This opinion was held by the Scotists, the Franciscans, and afterwards by the Jesuits. Thomas Aquinas and the Dominicans rejected it.

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(*a.*) Mary acknowledged Christ as God her Saviour, Luke i. 47.

(*b.*) She was born according to the natural law of generation and consequently was among the number of those to whom the sin of Adam extended, Rom. v. 12. "Who can bring a clean *thing* out of an unclean," Job. xiv. 4. That which is born of the flesh is flesh," John iii. 6. When it is said that "by one man sin entered into the world," no exception is to be made unless Scripture itself directly make it; but it makes no such exception in regard to Mary. But why dwell on the refutation of an opinion which has nothing but superstition to rest upon?

II. Let us proceed to consider the sinful condition in which all the posterity of Adam are placed in consequence of their descent from him, and the kind and merciful purpose of God by which he has delivered them from their obligation to everlasting destruction by revealing the covenant of grace or by abolishing their former state. As God has dealt with our first parents, so has he dealt with their posterity.

Our remarks on this subject will be

1. Didactic and
2. Controversial.

1. The condition in which all men are placed in consequence of their descent from Adam is usually called *original sin*—a phrase which, though not a scriptural one, is nevertheless in common use. We do not now enquire into its propriety. But yet we observe that, although it may be admitted and employed by us, we do not understand it as implying that men are to be considered as having committed the actual sin which Adam committed in Paradise, but as implying that their condition of sin originated with him and arose out of his fall. The name has thus its origin in Adam and in his fall.

By original sin we understand that condition which, according to the law of nature, has sprung from Adam and in which man is liable to sin and to all its consequences- -depravity, condemnation, and punishment, in virtue of his descent from fallen parents and on account of the fall of the first man from whom all are sprung. We must therefore

(*a.*) Prove and explain this condition and

(*b.*) Inquire into its origin and cause.

(*a.*) The condition in which men are born consists generally in their being liable to sin and involved in all its effects and consequences. Scripture says "that they are all under sin," Rom. iii. 9

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We also read, "that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us," Rom. v. 8. Man is called "flesh," "unclean," because he is born of the flesh and of what is unclean. Sin reigns in him. In the passage in which Paul treats of this subject (Rom. vii., viii.) sin is to be regarded as a king and lord, as laying claim to a certain dominion and power over man, and as involving him in the sentence of condemnation. This power of sin must be carefully attended to, because on it depends the correct view which we are to take of justification, in which we are declared to be freed not simply from the guilt of sin properly so called or our liability to eternal death, but in particular from the power which sin exercises and from the consequences which sin entails upon us—depravity, namely, condemnation, and punishment.

There is *first* depravity or moral corruption. We lay down this proposition, that men namely by their birth are depraved, inasmuch as they have in them naturally the principle of depravity. As this proposition is denied by some we shall

† Prove and

†† Explain it.

† Our proofs are drawn

(.) From passages in Scripture in which this truth is directly or indirectly unfolded and inculcated. For instance, it is said of man before the flood "that every imagination of the thoughts of his heart *was* only evil continually," Gen. vi. 5. To understand these words aright we must admit that reference is made in them properly to depravity as it manifests itself with the use of reason. For the imagination of the heart is mentioned which is manifested in early years. It denotes all that man desires and does. It is not the heart itself but what springs up in the heart, *φρόνημα τῆς σαρκὸς*, Rom. viii. 6. And, as this is evil, man must be unfit to form good thoughts by the determination of his will. It must also be admitted that the words refer to the most abandoned depravity, not indeed as applicable at all times, but in particular to the antediluvian age, on account of which God sent the flood, and therefore to depravity manifesting and exercising itself in its utmost strength. Nevertheless we rightly understand the language referring to natural corruption, as what is presupposed in them by God. (‖) Because it is conveyed from childhood, and appears as soon as reason begins to be exercised, which could not be understood if depravity were not already in existence when man begins to use his reason. (‖‖) The very fact that depravity was at that time so great proves that it had its begin-

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ning when men were born. It would not have risen to such a height if there had not been a depraved principle natural to man. The words therefore mean that at that time natural depravity broke out without restraints from the time when men began to shew that they were endued with reason, and led them to the utmost extent of wickedness in their actions, so that there were no means by which they could be restrained except by education, human laws, and warnings. But it prevailed to such a degree that it surmounted all barriers. And hence it is plain that it is natural to man, and unless checked by some such means as those mentioned, would necessarily lead to the most fearful consequences.

"Who," asks Job, "can bring a clean thing out of an unclean? not one," Job xiv. 4. In this passage natural depravity is expressed by the word *unclean,* by which we are to understand not only physical but moral pollution. And thus it is equivalent in meaning to what our Lord says, "That which is born of the flesh is flesh," John iii. 6. David also refers to this innate depravity in the confession which he made of his very aggravated sin. In order that he might humble himself more deeply before God, he traces his sin to its principle and source, and confesses that he was corrupt from his very birth, and deserved to be rejected. He not only frankly acknowledges the particular sin which he had committed, but his condition as a sinner from the very first moment of his existence. For he says that he was conceived in sin, not that he might extenuate his sin of adultery, but that he might point to the polluted fountain from which that sin proceeded, Ps. li. 5. The words can bear no other meaning unless it be admitted that man is born in a state of sin, with the principle of depravity in his heart. For in what other sense could David be said to be born in sin? Is it that he was born in the sin of adultery, or that his mother sinned in some other way when she conceived him? Certainly not; nor would he have been justified in recording his mother's sin and in handing it down to posterity. Nor does he simply speak hyperbolically, as some maintain, with the view of aggravating his offence. Not to mention that his language wears no such aspect, he simply confesses his sin, and shews that he was born with the seeds of corruption in his nature. This sense of the passage admits nothing else than this. Therefore man must have in him the principle of depravity from his very birth.

Our Lord says the same thing. "That which is born of the flesh is flesh," in opposition to that which is born of the Spirit, John iii.

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6. By *flesh* he certainly does not mean the body merely, so that what springs from it must be frail in its nature, but the depravity seated in the flesh, which, agreeably to the usage of Scripture, is represented as conveyed from parents to their children, so that all need to undergo the second and spiritual birth. For he places in opposition to each other the flesh and the Spirit, by the former of which we understand the cause of all moral evil, and by the latter the cause of all moral good. His meaning therefore is, man is born in a state of depravity.

(..) We derive another proof from the various metaphorical expressions which Scripture employs. We have what especially serves our present purpose—the phrase the "old man," Rom. vi. 6; Eph. iv. 22, as opposed to the new, which springs from regeneration, repentance, and faith, and is posterior to the "old man." The old man therefore must be moral depravity which has spread itself through his whole nature, and which is in him from the moment of his entrance into the world. Hence it is that it is called "man," and the "old man," just as the new man is the renewal of his affections and actions resulting from regeneration and pervading his whole nature. It must therefore be co-existent with man himself, and infect all his powers both of body and soul.

(∴) The necessity of regeneration is another proof of the truth of this doctrine. Our Lord represents the absolute necessity of this change when he says, that "except a man be born again he cannot see the kingdom of God," John iii. 3. The expression has reference to natural generation, to which he places it in opposition. But if all men of every age and condition require to become subjects of this new birth, then certainly their first and natural birth must be depraved and bring along with it moral depravity. Our Lord expressly confirms this when he adds, "that which is born of the flesh is flesh."

(::) If we consult experience we may be convinced of the truth of this doctrine. For as soon as children begin to exercise reason, they shew waywardness of affection, obstinacy, carnal desire, and other symptoms of a depraved nature, and unless these were checked by discipline they would run out into every form of evil. Now it is impossible to explain this unless it be admitted that they are born in a depraved state. How, moreover, could the universal extent of this depravity be accounted for if it be not natural—how could man be hurried into such enormous wickedness and crime if his nature were not depraved?

(:·:) The truth of the doctrine, moreover, is confirmed by the opin-

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ion which has prevailed in the church in every age. We have a proof of this opinion in the two sacraments—circumcision and baptism—which have been administered to infants, and which clearly shew that man is carnal and requires to be cleansed.

These arguments are sufficient to prove that all mankind are born in sin, and have therefore original native depravity.

But in order to attain a more accurate knowledge of this depravity let us

†† Explain it, and shew the extent in which it still exists in man.

In *explaining* this depravity let us attend

(*a.*) To its origin,

(*b.*) To the extent to which man is affected by it, and

(*c.*) To its external effects in what are called actual sins.

(*a.*) The *origin* of this depravity consists, we think, in an inordinate sinful desire after what is really or apparently good. We call it a sinful desire, and not without reason; because desire in itself is good, and means only a longing after our own happiness, which is natural to us. When it is directed to an object that is in reality good, and in a manner conformed to the nature of that object, and to the relations in which it stands to us and to our happiness, we are justified in cherishing such a desire. It is called the love of God and of our neighbour; for God is our chief good, and therefore as such is to be desired with our whole heart and mind, while we are to love our neighbour as ourselves. Such desire therefore is in itself good. But we are speaking now of that which is depraved and sinful,—by which we long for what is apparently good, instead of for what is really so, value an object that is really good more highly than we ought, instead of subordinating it to the chief good, lavish our affections upon it as if it were the chief good itself, and direct and subject to it all our other desires. This desire is of three kinds, according to the objects on which it is fixed. These are mentioned in Scripture, 1 John ii. 16. (.) There is the desire of the good things of this life, or what is called covetousness, or as John expresses it, "the lust of the eye." (..) There is sensual desire, or what is styled "the lust of the flesh." (∴) There is the desire of worldly glory and honour, of power or ambition, or what the apostle calls "the pride of life."

Scripture clearly intimates that this lust or sinful desire is the source of human depravity. It calls this depravity *flesh*. It places this desire last in the decalogue, as the source of all depravity or transgression. As the love of God and of our neighbour is the ful-

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filling of the law, so lust tends to the violation of all its requirements, inasmuch as it stirs up man to sin. Paul tells us so when he says that he "had not known lust, except the law had said, Thou shalt not covet," Rom. vii. 7. He calls sin a "law" in his members, which brought him into captivity, verse 23. James is still more clear on the point when he says (i. 15), that "when lust hath conceived, it bringeth forth sin."

The very nature of the thing teaches the same truth. For we are so constituted, that, according to the opinion we form of the chief good, and according to the desire by which we are actuated for our happiness, we necessarily regulate all our feelings and actions. If, therefore, we desire what is not really good, unquestionably our other affections and our actions must correspond to that desire and be depraved. We are right accordingly in regarding such desire as that which lies at the foundation of all our depravity.

(*b.*) This depravity extends to both the mind and body of man, and to all that results from the union that subsists between them.

(.) His understanding, judgment, and will, are depraved, and cannot discharge their functions aright.

He is so ignorant of God, and of all that relates to divine things, that he is unable to form correct ideas regarding them, or to judge of their real value. He is indisposed alike to the knowledge and investigation of the truth, to the labour which is necessary to the attainment of it, and to the use of the means which must be employed in searching for it. He is the slave of his own lusts, and according to these he regulates his thoughts and desires.

He forms erroneous conceptions of God, and judges of all the truths that relate to God under the influence of prejudice, and according to his own evil desires, that is to say, just as it is most convenient and agreeable to himself. And hence the views which he entertains of God, of the duty which he owes to God, of the beauty of virtue, and of the deformity of vice, are false. He does not know God in his real character, but as his own desires dictate; he supposes that he is such a one as himself, and that he winks at sin, Ps. l. 21.

In consequence of this depravity he is unable to form correct thoughts, and to judge aright regarding them. Hence the apostle says that "the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness unto him," 1 Cor. ii. 14, *i.e.*, he is carnal and actuated by depraved affections and desires, and always thinks and judges agreeably to these.

It is plain that his *will* is corrupt, because his desires are opposed

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to the love of God and of his neighbour. He has no affection for God. Although he may sometimes seem to be actuated by this principle, yet he has a stronger love for himself, and for the gratification of his own lusts. Nay he is so far from loving God and his neighbour that he hates—an expression somewhat too strong, unless it be properly explained. Yet sinners are called haters of God, Ps. lxxxiii. 2; not indeed as he is a Being of infinite perfection—even devils themselves are not chargeable with this, they rather tremble at the thought of him—but they hate him because his commands are so just and good and holy, and because his nature necessarily leads him to inflict punishment upon sinners. They thus regard him only as their own desires dictate. The man who looks upon God and his will with such aversion may certainly be said to hate him in his capacity of supreme lawgiver, the law which he has given, and the sanction by which that law is enforced. He is said in like manner to hate his neighbour, inasmuch as he does not do to him what he would have done to himself, expects from him only what may tend to his own advantage, and, if any thing occur to mar his own happiness and desires, entertains for him feelings of aversion, and assumes toward him an attitude of opposition and resistance.

(..) His body also is carnal, and is the seat of lust, its members are inclined to obey evil desires; so that in this respect he may be said to be, what Paul calls him, the servant of sin, Rom. vi. 16. All the senses and all the members of his body tend to make him the slave of corruption.

(∴) The powers resulting from the union of soul and body, are also in a state of depravity. This is true of the imagination; for man forms to himself erroneous ideas, and accumulates them in his imagination, according as it suits his own evil desires—of the memory which retains only what is evil, because he habitually indulges thoughts of this description—and of his affections which are lustful, fickle, turbulent, and hurry him into anger, hatred, &c.

(*c.*) This original depravity manifests itself in our external actions, which are called *actual sins*. Here, therefore, we must advert to the various kinds of these, for they are manifold, and may be distinguished into classes according to the view we take of those who commit them, and of the relations in which they are placed.

(1.) In relation to God and to his law, which enjoins and forbids, sins are distinguished into those of *omission* and *commission*.

(.) Sins of *omission* are transgressions of the law which commands, or the not doing what it requires.

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(..) Sins of *commission* are transgressions of the law which forbids, or the doing what it prohibits. But of this distinction we have spoken already.

(2.) In regard to the *manner* in which sins are committed, they are distinguished into sins *per se* and *per accidens*, or into sins *materialiter* and *formaliter*.

(.) That is called a sin *per se* which is wholly so in respect both of substance and of form, when a thing namely is omitted or done which in substance is opposed to the law—such as taking away the good name, or property, or life of another. But

(..) A sin *per accidens* is an action otherwise materially or in substance good, but bad in respect of the manner in which it is performed. Almsgiving, for instance, is unquestionably a work materially good, but when it is done under the influence of ambition, malice, superstition, or prodigality, it is to be regarded as an evil action, and, on account of the sin with which it is connected, becomes itself sin. This is sin *per accidens*. For it is not a matter of indifference from what principle and with what end in view actions are performed by us—they must proceed from a good principle, and be directed to a good end. And hence God has respect not to the external appearance of an action, but to the mind of him who performs it.

(3.) In relation to the *cause* from which sins proceed they are distinguished into sins of *ignorance*, *imprudence* or *heedlessness*, *infirmity*, *concupiscence*, *malice*, and *presumption*.

A man sins *ignorantly* when he transgresses a law of which he knew nothing. This ignorance however is distinguished into vincible and invincible. It is *invincible* when there are no means by which a man may attain a knowledge of the law, as is sometimes the case with the heathen. It is *vincible* when he has these means, but when he neglects or despises them, and thus continues ignorant of the law. The former of these is excusable—the latter is not only not so, but aggravates the guilt of those who are chargeable with it. Hence Christians sin more heinously when they live in the neglect of duty than the heathen who will be judged by the law of nature, Rom. ii. 14, 15.

A man commits a sin of *imprudence* or *heedlessness* who, when placed in certain circumstances, is hurried into it without attending to and reflecting upon his duty.

A sin of *infirmity* is one into which a man is led by the violence of his passions, for then they have the ascendency over him.

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A sin of *concupiscence* is that which a man commits when under the dominion of carnal desire, such as avarice, pride, &c.

A sin of *malice* consists in a man's doing what is evil of his own pleasure alone, without expecting to derive from it any advantage or benefit. He sins because he desires to sin, because it gives him pleasure to do so, without his being hurried by his passions or other evil principles or his returning to himself after his sin. When an individual injures his neighbour only because he takes delight in doing so, he sins maliciously against him to whom he stands in the relation of a neighbour.

He sins *presumptuously* who does so to boast of his power and liberty—who challenges God himself, makes no account of his law, disregards what is allowed and forbidden, and acts in haughty defiance and with conceited notions of his own freedom. The last two principles are the most wicked and more aggravated than the others.

(4.) In relation to its *effects*, sin is distinguished into that which has dominion over a man and that which has not, Rom. vi. 7.

Sin has dominion over a man when he serves it, receives its impressions without a struggle or without regret, and therefore with delight, and unreluctantly surrenders himself to actions which are evil. Such is the case with every man who has not repented and who has not been born again.

That man on the contrary is freed from sin who does not commit it designedly and with delight, but who is hurried by his passions or seduced by concupiscence—who does not continue in sin but who strives against it, and is affected, when he has committed it, with penitence, shame, and sorrow. This is the case with believers, who although they fall sometimes into sin are filled with grief and sadness on account of it.

(5.) In regard to *subject*, sins may be distinguished into those of the spirit and those of the flesh, 2 Cor. vii. 1.

That is called a sin of the spirit which has its seat in the innermost affections, thoughts, and volitions of the mind, in reference especially to God and divine things.

Sins of the flesh again are those which have their origin in the body and which are committed by the body, and in this sense our actions are external.

(6.) In respect of *object*, sins may be distinguished into those which are committed against God and those which are committed against our neighbour.

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Sins are said to have God for their object when they are committed directly against him, his majesty, his law, his will, and his providence, when, for instance, a man denies the existence of God, pours out against him and his providence taunts and reproaches, charges his dispensations with folly or injustice, and dares to expostulate with him in regard to his procedure.

Sins are committed against our *neighbour* when, though we have justice on our side, we oppress him, when we reproach and slander him, or when we inflict injury upon him in regard to his reputation, his body, or his substance.

(7.) In reference to God as the governor of the world and to his justice in the administration of his government, sins are distinguished into those which call for vengeance from God even in the present life, and into those which God in the exercise of his long-suffering bears, and which he does not punish except in the life to come. The former are so heinous in their character that he cannot extend towards them his forbearance in this world. And hence they are called *clamant* or *crying sins* because they as it were call alone for the infliction of the divine vengeance. Some of these are recorded in Scripture. The blood of Abel is represented as crying unto God from the ground, Gen. iv. 10. So is the sin of Sodom and Gomorrah, Gen. xviii. 20, 21; the oppression by the Egyptians of the children of Israel, Exod. iii. 9; the covetousness of the Chaldeans, Hab. ii. 11; and the fraud of those who kept back the hire of their labourers, James v. 4. Among these crying sins may be ranked also those which are committed insolently in the face of a well-known law, and which God will not forgive, Numb. xv. 30. To the same class belongs that sin which an apostle calls "a sin unto death," 1 John v. 16. This seems to be plain from the context in which he does not desire us to pray for the forgiveness of such a sin in this life, seeing that God is wont to make a signal display of his vengeance against it even here.

(8.) There is still another distinction of sins into *venial* and *mortal* in respect of the economy of grace in which God for Christ's sake forgives sins, and absolves from all sin those who repent and believe. But he excepts only one sin—that namely which is called the sin against the Holy Ghost and which is said to be unpardonable, Matt. xii. 31, 32. It will be worth while therefore to enquire into the nature of this sin and to ascertain why it is so called and why it is said that it will not be forgiven.

We may judge of its nature from the following passages of Scripture, Matt. xii. 31, 32; Mark iii. 29; Acts xiii. 46; Heb. vi. 4; x.

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26; 1 Tim. i. 13. By an attentive consideration of these passages we learn that the sin against the Holy Ghost consists *in an individual's not only rejecting saving fundamental truth clearly proved even to his conviction, but in his reviling and to the utmost of his power persecuting those who confess that truth, just because he hates it, or in his wilfully, presumptuously, and from a regard to some secular advantage, denying the truth after having known and publicly avowed his adherence to it.*

This sin against the Holy Ghost accordingly consists of two parts. The one is the rejection of the truth to be believed—a rejection accompanied with reproaches and persecution, and contrary to the dictates of conscience; the other, the denial of evangelical truth after being received, publicly professed, and to some extent experienced, and a carnal wilful apostacy from the faith.

The former consists in an individual's not only rejecting saving truth proved to his conviction by the strongest arguments, but also in his reviling and persecuting those who profess to have received that truth and that in opposition to the dictates of his own conscience and to his own conviction, and under the influence of hatred, envy, and other evil passions.

In order more clearly to understand the nature of this sin let us distinguish between its *substance* and its *form*. The former consists in the rejection of the truth presented in Scripture and in reviling and opposing it though shewn to be based on indisputable evidence. The latter consists in doing this in the face of conviction—meaning by this not a real and saving persuasion which a man can never oppose and resist, but a conviction which does not change the mind and bring the affections into subjection to the truth, a conviction which only shuts the mouth so that it can say nothing in opposition to the truth. That the sin against the Holy Ghost consists in this is evident from the passages already referred to. Matthew mentions (xii. 22–24) that when Christ had healed a man possessed of a devil, the Jews affirmed that he had done so "by Beelzebub the prince of the devils." They said this contrary to their own convictions, for they knew that Satan did not cast out Satan. They spoke under the influence of hatred and envy. Those whom Paul and Barnabas addressed (Acts xiii. 46) had sufficient evidence and were convinced of the truth. When Paul says (1 Tim. i. 13) that, though he had been a persecutor, he obtained mercy because he did it ignorantly, he intimates that he did not act contrary to conviction, because he had had no such evidence. Hence it is evident that the nature of this

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sin implies that there is clear and sufficient evidence of the truth—evidence which none can oppose unless actuated by a spirit of malignity.

The other part of this sin consists in an individual's denying evangelical truth after it has been known, satisfactorily proved, and publicly professed, and in his apostatizing from the faith, not under the influence of fear or of actual suffering, but wilfully, presumptuously, and from regard to worldly advantage. The *form* of this part of the sin is the same as that of the other part. It is not necessary, however, before an individual can be guilty of it, that he revile and persecute the truth, —it is enough if he wilfully and presumptuously renounce it. See Heb. vi. 4, 6 ; x. 26, 27.

In respect of the *quantity* or heinousness of this sin, our Lord declares that it will never be forgiven either in the present life or in that which is to come. The apostle says that if a man be chargeable with it, it is impossible "to renew" him "again unto repentance," Heb. vi. 6, and that, "if we sin wilfully after that we have received the knowledge of the truth, there remaineth no more sacrifice for sins, but a certain fearful looking for of judgment," &c., Heb. x. 26, 27. On this subject three inquiries present themselves

1. Why this sin is so called,
2. Why it is unpardonable, and
3. Whether it may still be committed.

1. Why is this sin called the sin against the Holy Ghost? A distinction is made between it and a sin against the Son of man, the latter of which is pardonable, the former not, Matt. xii. 31, 32. In order to ascertain the reason of this distinctive name, we must attend to the dispensations of the Son and of the Holy Ghost respectively. To sin against the Son of man is to deny or reject him, his doctrine, and his law. But as this may be done in various ways and from different motives, he is said to sin against the Holy Ghost who rejects and denies Christ contrary to his conscientious convictions. In this lies the distinction between the two sins mentioned. In substance they may be the same, but in form they are different. He who denies the Son, in any way or from any motive, commits a sin against the Son; but, when he does this in opposition to the dictates of his own conscience, he sins against the Holy Ghost. In the divine economy the Holy Ghost is represented as proving or demonstrating the truth to our conscience and conviction, and hence, as we shewed when speaking of the Trinity, this sin is said to be committed against him. A

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sin against the Son of man accordingly becomes the sin against the Holy Ghost when conscience and conviction are opposed and resisted.

2. The unpardonableness of this sin is a subject which it is almost impossible to explain. We should rest satisfied with the declaration of God in the matter, and may at least learn from it this lesson, that in his estimation it is a very heinous sin, and that he would have all be on their guard against the commission of it. Still we may say this much, that it is unpardonable, because there remain no longer any means by which the individual guilty of it may be "renewed again unto repentance." The only means by which this object can be effected is the manifestation of the truth to the conscience; for God deals with men not immediately, but mediately by his word and by manifesting that word so as to produce conviction. But if an individual directly oppose this manifestation, then there is no other means by which any moral impression can be made upon him. And thus *by his own nature* this sin is unpardonable, because, as the apostle says, he cannot be "renewed again unto repentance," Heb. vi. 6. He is accordingly given up as he says again to "strong delusion, that" he "should believe a lie." He is delivered to mental blindness and obduracy. God indeed, in the exercise of his power, can do all things, but this is not the question now. Besides by committing this sin a man renders himself unworthy of the communication of *ulterior* grace, while at the same time he acts in the exercise of perfect liberty, Acts xiii. 46.

3. We dare not affirm or deny that this sin may be committed now. Perhaps it is impossible to settle the question.

(.) Because we know not what degree of manifestation of the truth to the conscience is necessary before an individual can be said to commit this sin.

(..) Because the conviction which we have of the truth differs widely from that which men had in the time of Christ and of his apostles. The preaching of the truth was accompanied at that time by the working of miracles and by an abundant outpouring of the extraordinary influences of the Holy Spirit, neither of which attends the preaching of the truth now. The degree of conviction in our day is not what it was then. Still as the dispensation under which we live is sufficient, the individual who opposes himself to it in opposition to the dictates of his conscience, and under the influence of evil affections, is certainly not far from the commission of this sin if he does not actually commit it. He who wilfully renounces the truth

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after having openly professed it unquestionably approaches the very borders of this sin. In the meantime there are various steps that lead to it, and against these whatever they are it behoves us to be on our guard—such as rejecting any truth which has been proved to our conviction from hatred, envy, or presumption, and thus shewing that we have no love for the truth. Thus the apostle says God sends those who receive " not the love of the truth strong delusion that they should believe a lie," 2 Thess. ii. 10, 11. And unquestionably it is a matter of vast importance to receive nothing as truth which has not been so proved.

Having thus explained the depravity or moral corruption which is natural to man, we shall now consider its magnitude, and in particular, whether it be so great that man by nature is unable to perform any work that is in reality and in a spiritual sense good, and accordingly unable, without the enlightening and converting grace of God, savingly to believe in Christ. In our opinion the depravity is so great, that man naturally labours under this inability. Still it is no infringement upon our liberty, although it may be so in appearance, that we are so inclined to sin that we cannot but commit it, no more than it would have been, had we never fallen, that we could not but practice holiness. In speaking of the magnitude of this depravity we shall

(*a*.) Shew that it has the ascendancy over all men, and

(*b*.) Reconcile its power with our liberty.

(*a*.) We say that man in consequence of this corruption is naturally incapable without the grace of God of performing any work that is really and spiritually good. In order to understand this more clearly, let the following things be observed.

(.) When we speak of a good work we mean not every work which may be so called, but such only as is well pleasing t, God. We do not say that man can do nothing that is physically, politically, or morally good, if we take into account merely the τὸ *materiale* of his actions. He may, for instance, read the word of God—he may frequent the sanctuary—he may distribute alms—he may give to every one his due. To such actions as these we do not now allude. We speak of works that are really and spiritually good—works namely which proceed from the principle of love to God and to our neighbour —works which have for their object the advancement of the divine glory and of the welfare of others—works which are not only materially, but formally good, and which flow not from a corrupt but from a spiritual principle, such as that to which we have just referred.

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(..) When we say that men are incapable of performing such works, we do not mean that all men are equally so. We admit that there are various degress of this incapacity. All are not depraved to the same extent, although all have by nature the principle of depravity. This difference is owing frequently to constitutional temperament, to education, and discipline good or bad—to the example set before them, and to the pursuits in which they engage. According as an individual, therefore, has had a good or bad training, and instruction, and example, his incapacity will be greater or less. Still depravity exists in all and, unless effectually restrained, will manifest itself.

(∴) We do not affirm that man is physically incapacitated for doing what is good, much less do we hold with Flaccius Illyricus, that in substance he is depraved. We say that he labours under moral inability. But it is asked, wherein lies the difference between these two? We answer, an individual is said to be physically unable, when he has not the powers requisite for the doing of any particular thing; whereas he is morally unable, who has the powers indeed, but who does not make the right use of them. The former is excusable, for his incapacity is not produced by himself; the latter is the culpable cause of his own incapacity, and accordingly is without excuse. A physical incapacity, for instance, to do what angelic beings alone can do, or to attain the knowledge which they possess, cannot be imputed to man as sin, because he is destitute of the powers necessary for the performance of such actions and for the attainment of such knowledge. Such an incapacity as this is just as excusable as an incapacity to touch the moon with our right hand. A moral incapacity, however, is not thus excusable, because man has himself produced it —because his prejudices, passions, and evil desires prevent him from using as he ought the powers of understanding, judgment, and will, which God has given him. Such is our inability—an inability as grievous and on account of our depravity as invincible as that which is physical—but an inability at the same time in extenuation of which we have nothing to plead.

We hold then that man is morally unable of himself to do what is really and spiritually good. Let us endeavour to prove this.

1. Scripture bears testimony to this point when it says that men naturally are subjected to passions and lust, and unable to perceive and approve divine truths, "because they are spiritually discerned," 1 Cor. ii. 14. "The carnal mind" (*φρόνημα τῆς σαρκὸς*) "is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be," Rom, viii. 7.

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This is what the apostle proves at greater length, (Rom. vii.) In the whole of this chapter his object is to show that, although a man may go so far as in his practical judgment to approve of the divine law, and even to form unfinished purposes to obey that law, it is nevertheless impossible for him to do what it requires, because he is under the dominion of a stronger principle—there is a law in his members which leads him into captivity, so that, although he perceive and approve the better, he nevertheless pursues the worse.

2. Scripture besides says that man is "the servant of sin," John viii. 34; Rom. vi. 16, 17; 2 Pet. ii. 19;—and that he is "sold under sin," Rom. vii. 14—an expression intimating that he is no longer master of himself, but that, like a servant and slave, he is in subjection to the power of another, and is led and acted upon by reigning corruption.

3. Scripture represents man as "dead in sins," and requiring to be "quickened," Eph. ii. 5. It says that he has a "stony heart," Ezek. xxxvi. 26;—and calls him "flesh," John iii. 6, and "carnal," Rom. vii. 14.

4. This doctrine is still further confirmed by that which relates to the necessity of enlightening, converting, and regenerating grace, of which we shall speak hereafter, but which we now take for granted. If man did not labour under the incapacity to which we refer, he would not stand in need of this grace. If no man is regenerated and converted without this grace, then he must be unable of himself to produce such a change. The apostle moreover expressly proves this incapacity and the necessity of divine grace, Rom. vii. He introduces himself as a Jew who, though he had the law and the assistance of reason, was yet unable without the grace of God to deliver himself from the power and bondage of corruption.

(*b.*) But how can this doctrine be reconciled with our liberty? How can man be said to be free when he is thus laid under the necessity of sinning? Pelagians, Socinians, and others, viewing these things as opposed to each other, deny the doctrine which we hold regarding the depravity of man. They say that it is at direct variance with his liberty, of which however he must not be deprived. And their opinion rests on this ground, that liberty is that power of the mind by which, granting that he has every thing requisite to enable him to act, he may in the exercise of his practical judgment either act or not, and act in one way rather than in another; that, although he may judge that he should adopt a particular course of action, and that a certain thing is good and useful for him, and although at the very moment

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when he must act he may think that one thing is hurtful and that another is profitable, yet notwithstanding this practical judgment which must have place in action, he may not act as he should do, as circumstances require, and as his own judgment dictated, but may act in a totally different way. If this be human liberty, then unquestionably it is irreconcilable with the incapacity which we maintain and with the necessity of sinning under which man unhappily labours. We deny, however, in the strongest possible terms, that our liberty cannot but be infringed, unless this definition of it be admitted. We hold indeed that we have a certain kind of liberty in respect of things indifferent which have no relation to us and in regard to which we may act just as we please, but we deny that our liberty is of such a kind in matters which concern our everlasting happiness.

Several reasons might be adduced in confirmation of our opinion; but as the subject belongs to the department of natural theology, we shall refer only to one or two.

(.) The liberty for which our opponents contend does not belong to all spiritual beings—not to God, nor angels, nor the redeemed in heaven. They cannot by any means be regarded as free in the sense which they attach to freedom. It does not belong to God, for he would then deny himself and his own happiness. Neither does it belong to other rational beings, for then all would be in possession of it; but, as all do not possess it at all times and in every condition, it cannot belong to their nature as such. Although they all have freedom of will, they have not liberty of indifference, and in this indifference, therefore, their freedom of will does not consist. God cannot but do what is good; and man, as experience teaches, cannot, with the affections which he has, but do what is evil.

(..) Conscience and experience prove that we do not possess liberty as our opponents define it. When we are placed in circumstances in which we have to choose between what we think good and evil, we are always inclined to choose the former. We cannot do otherwise—we cannot reject the good and prefer the evil. Even when we do choose what is evil, we do so not because it is evil, but because it has to us the appearance—false, no doubt—but still the appearance of being good. We think we perceive in it something to please and gratify us. But let freedom of will be such that, supposing a man has all that is necessary to enable him to act in a certain way, he may yet not act or act in a precisely opposite way, then he might choose evil as such, which yet is in direct opposition to conscience.

(∴) If moreover liberty be what our opponents hold it to be, then

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unquestionably the faculties of the mind are in opposition to themselves—the mind destroys itself. As the will and judgment uniformly follow the understanding, so that we cannot determine otherwise than according to the representation which it gives us, so we cannot will except as the judgment dictates. We cannot will in the matter of our happiness in opposition to light and judgment and our own persuasion, unless some reason be supplied by our affections; for our faculties are so connected that we believe whatever the understanding represents to us as true, and necessarily love whatever the judgment pronounces to be good. Our liberty therefore is not of such a nature that we can in a moment act contrary to our judgment, and is not, as our opponents hold, inconsistent with the necessity for which we contend.

What, then, it may be asked, is the nature of our liberty? It is, we reply, what is otherwise called the liberty of spontaneity in things which relate, or which we suppose to relate, to our happiness, for we do not now speak of things indifferent which have no such relation. Now the liberty of spontaneity consists in an individual's acting of his own accord and without constraint, in his judging according to the light which his understanding gives him, and in his willing and acting in conformity to the dictates of his judgment.

Is this liberty then unaffected by the doctrine which we hold regarding the incapacity of man as a moral being to perform what is good, and regarding the necessity under which he labours to do what is bad?

We say that it is, but that it is at the same time depraved and corrupt. Still it consists in our acting according to our judgment and under the influence of motives. We act according to our inclination. Just as a man addicted to drunkenness is impelled by his ruling desire to quaff the intoxicating cup, and yet acts willingly and of his own accord, so it holds true in regard to other besetting and habitual sins. Man is indeed the servant, but he is the willing servant of sin. He is to a certain extent bound by the fetters of sin and as it were shut up in a prison, but in that prison he sins willingly, and takes delight in its pollution, so that although he had the will he has not the power to go forth from it. He sees in sin only what is good and profitable and pleasant, he looks upon what is evil as if it were really good, because it ministers to his gratification, and therefore he acts spontaneously. It may happen indeed that he acts contrary to his speculative judgment, but in this case there is within him another principle at work—the principle of depravity namely—affecting and

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governing his judgment and inclinations, taking the direction of his will, and causing him by false representations of things to act in opposition to his speculative judgment. Morally, therefore, he can do only that which is evil because his inclinations are depraved.

CHAPTER XXXI.

EFFECTS OF THE FALL.

CONDEMNATION—PROOFS—CAUSES OF DEPRAVITY — PROXIMATE CAUSE — HOW PROPAGATED—REMOTE CAUSE—IMPUTATION IMMEDIATE AND MEDIATE—MEDIATE IMPUTATION PROVED—OBJECTIONS ANSWERED.

Having finished what we had to say concerning moral depravity, and having seen that the posterity of Adam are naturally in such a state and that their depravity is invincible, it remains that we offer some remarks upon its condemnation and punishment, and shew that all men are lying under the one and exposed to the other.

By condemnation we understand, as our Church and all Christians believe, an obligation to suffer physical evils of every description, both temporal and eternal. Here let it be observed that, although the evils to which we are liable be not only temporal and of every kind but also eternal, they are nevertheless of various degrees. For we are not to suppose that those who have committed no actual sins will be punished by God in the same manner and degree as those who have. It is admitted by all that there is a variety in this respect, and that there are punishments of loss *(pœnæ damni)* and punishments of sense *(pœnæ sensus)*, by the former of which we mean the privation of happiness—a privation, however, which cannot but be also in some measure a punishment of sense. There are other evils besides which God inflicts upon sinners in different degrees. We do not say for instance that children who sin are so severely punished as adult transgressors. But what particular punishment and what degree of it he inflicts on those who have natural depravity alone, and who have committed no actual sins, we cannot say. Nor is it necessary to settle this point, because it has no connection with the subject now under discussion. All we have to do is to prove that men in consequence

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of natural depravity are under a sentence of condemnation and exposed to punishment.

(.) We find this expressly stated in Scripture. "Wherefore, as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned," Rom. v. 12. In this passage no doubt temporal death is meant in the first instance, but we are to understand eternal death also as implied—meaning by eternal death not annihilation, but the loss of communion with God, and all the miseries which flow from that loss. This is evident, because the apostle in the same chapter calls this death condemnation, and because in the following chapter he places it in opposition to eternal life. "For the wages of sin *is* death; but the gift of God *is* eternal life through our Lord Jesus Christ, Rom. vi. 23. To die in Adam is opposed to being made alive in Christ. "As in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive," 1 Cor. xv. 22. Death therefore is opposed to the life which is given at the resurrection, and is also eternal. To the same purpose we find it said that "the wrath of God abideth on him" who does not believe on the Son, John iii. 36; and therefore men in their natural state are liable in a higher or lower sense to that wrath.

(..) The evils which God denounced against Adam were not confined after the fall to him alone, but, as experience and the history of every age show, extended to all his posterity. They are still inflicted by God, and are inflicted upon all.

(∴) The natural connection that subsists between condemnation and depravity leads us to infer the truth which we are endeavouring to establish. For, being in a state of depravity as we have already shewn, we cannot but be liable to the evils which it occasions. In this sense the apostle calls us "by nature the children of wrath," (Eph. ii. 3) *i. e.* by natural consequence, as the word φύσις denotes, we are on account of our depravity the children of wrath, and liable in greater or less degree to its infliction. For God renders "to every man according to his deeds," Rom. ii. 6. On this subject however we have already spoken.

(*b.*) Let us now inquire into the cause of this state of depravity and misery. This cause is of two kinds—the one *proximate* and *mediate*, our descent, namely, from corrupt parents—and the other *remote* or *primary*, the depravity, namely, and sin of Adam.

The *proximate* and *mediate* cause, we say, is our descent from corrupt parents. All who admit original sin acknowledge that our depravity and wretchedness are to be traced to this cause. Such

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is the doctrine of Scripture. We are, as David says, shapen in iniquity and conceived in sin, Ps. li. 5. Our Lord clearly teaches the same truth when he says "that which is born of the flesh is flesh," John iii. 6. So does Job, when he asks "who can bring a clean thing out of an unclean?" Job xiv. 4.

In regard to the question as to the propagation of original sin by natural generation—whether, namely, it be through the soul or body—we reply, not through the soul considered by itself and apart from the body, nor yet through the body considered by itself and apart from the soul.

We hold that moral depravity is not propagated through the soul considered by itself, inasmuch as the soul proceeds from God, but that it has its seat in the body and is propagated by means of the body.

(.) Because the soul is immediately from God, and is not *per traducem, i.e.* is not propagated like the body. We here take this for granted—hereafter we shall prove it. Scripture uniformly represents God as creating a soul in every man; and hence he is called "the Father of spirits," Heb. xii. 9; and the former of "the spirit of man within him," Zech. xii. 1. But he is not the efficient cause of depravity. "The lust of the flesh is not of the Father," (1 John ii. 16), and therefore can have no existence in the soul as it proceeds from his hands. Now the soul cannot be propagated by generation. It cannot proceed from the bodies of the parents, because it is not material, nor from the soul, because it can have no being but by a new creation of which they are incapable and unconscious. It proceeds therefore from God. But it cannot have from him the principle of depravity, because, as we have said, nothing that is evil can originate with him, 1 John ii. 16; Deut. xxxii. 5; Hos. xiii. 9.

(..) The very nature of the case requires this. For God is holy, just, and good, and can immediately and efficiently produce nothing which does not bear the impress of these attributes. We have in our souls as they come from God the remains of that holiness with which he first endowed them. Hence it is that we perceive the difference between moral good and evil, and that we are naturally inclined to that which seems to us good, if some other principle did not hurry us into that which is evil. But this could not be the case unless the soul were created by God with pure and upright faculties, and without any innate principle of depravity.

This propagation, then, is through the body. Scripture clearly intimates that such is the case—it says that depravity is propagated by our descent from our parents, although from them we have only

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our bodies, and not our souls which are from God. Hence David says that he was conceived by his mother in sin; Job, that a clean thing cannot be brought out of an unclean; and Christ, that "that which is born of the flesh is flesh." We are led therefore to ascribe this propagation to the body, and to carnal generation. This is proved by the fact that the same vices and the same inclinations which are seen in parents are seen also in their children, and therefore the propagation of original sin must be by means of the body.

(∴) It is not to be supposed that this propagation is effected by means of the body as such, and considered apart by itself (for in this view there cannot be sin in it, nor can it be, properly speaking, the seat of sin), but considered as united to the soul. And thus, though the soul was created by God after the fall as well as before it, yet now, in consequence of this union, it has not the free use of its powers, and accordingly receives its impressions only from the body to which it is mysteriously linked, and is affected according to the constitution of the body. Thus, therefore, the soul, in consequence of this union, receives its imperfections, and acquires those affections and lusts which we call carnal.

We can say no more on this subject. We are aware, indeed, that what we have said is not without its difficulties, and that we cannot form a distinct idea of the matter. But let the observations we have made suffice, and let us leave as we find them those points in regard to which we have no information. It is enough for us to know that men are depraved, and that they are so in consequence of their natural descent. It is of little consequence whether we understand or not the precise manner in which this depravity is propagated.

But there is also a *remote* and *original* cause of this depravity—the sin, namely, and the fall of Adam. "By one man," Scripture says, "sin entered into the world," Rom. v. 12. "By the offence of one judgment came upon all men to condemnation," verse 18. "By one man's disobedience many were made sinners," verse 19. "As in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive," 1 Cor. xv. 22. These passages clearly show that we are to seek the primary and original cause of depravity in the sin and fall of Adam. But the nature of the case also requires this. For, as depravity is proximately from our parents, and as they again derived it in this way from those of whom they were born, we must ascend to our first parent Adam as the primary source from which we all proceed.

But, although this be certain, divines are not agreed in regard to the mode of it (*modum*) and the foundation on which it rests. In

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offering a few remarks on these, we shall, for the sake of distinctness, consider

1. The state of condemnation, and
2. The state of depravity in which we are placed, and the reason and ground of our being involved in both.

1. In respect of our condemnation or our obligation to suffer penal evils to which, as we have seen, we are liable by our birth, the question is, how the sin of Adam can be the cause of this condemnation. This is usually explained as being by *imputation*. This word is not employed in Scripture, but, because it is in common use and admits of a suitable explanation, we will take advantage of it. The sin of Adam, then, is by *imputation* the cause of condemnation to all his posterity. But this is not enough.

What is the manner, it is further asked, of this imputation? Is it *immediate* or *mediate?* Before answering this question, let us briefly explain the terms.

Imputation is a judicial act, by which God declares that an individual is to be punished on account of sin. But imputation is either of one's own sin or of the sin of another. In the former case, God, rendering to every man according to his deeds, pronounces the individual who is guilty to be deserving of punishment, or even sentences him to its infliction. In the latter case, a person, on account of a sin committed by another, is involved with that other in the same condemnation, and subjected to the same evils as if he himself had committed the sin. This latter imputation is of two kinds, or at least may be so understood—*immediate* and *mediate*.

Immediate imputation consists in an individual's being punished on account of the sin of another, without his being regarded as participating in the sin for which he is punished. That sin alone is the proximate and immediate cause of punishment, without taking into consideration whether he to whom it is imputed is accessory to the offence which has been committed by another, and for which he is made to suffer.

Mediate imputation, again, consists in an individual's being adjudged to punishment for the sin of another, on the ground that he, by approving or imitating, participates in that sin. In immediate imputation there is no communion, no participation. The sin of another is the only thing taken into account, and is regarded as the mediate and proximate cause of the evil which is inflicted upon us who did not commit the sin, and who are not supposed to have committed it or to have taken part in it. This is not the case

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in mediate imputation. The ground of punishment in this case is the sin in which we have taken a part. Thus Scripture says that the iniquities of parents are visited upon their children, who, because they inherit the same depraved nature, imitate the sins which their parents commit.

Is the imputation of Adam's sin to his posterity, then, *mediate* or *immediate*, as far as condemnation is concerned, for this is the only point which we are now considering?

Immediate imputation is the doctrine commonly held by divines, Yet there have been and there still are those who maintain that imputation is mediate, and it would be well for the reader to consult the writers on both sides.

We are in favour of mediate imputation. Those who hold that it is immediate say that the actual sin of Adam in Paradise—his eating, namely, of the fruit of a certain tree—considered by itself and apart from the depravity which was the consequence of it, was the immediate and proximate cause of depravity and condemnation and punishment not only to him but to all his posterity—that all men are born liable to eternal misery on account of that single offence which he committed without taking into account the depravity in which they are born.

Those, again, who hold that imputation is *mediate* admit that men are in a state of condemnation on account of their depravity and their participation in the sin of Adam. This, we say, they do not deny, but they maintain that the ground on which they are punished is not the sin itself, but their participation in that sin by reason of their natural corruption. This corruption is the antecedent, and the condemnation is its consequent, and not *vice versa*; so that God, in imputing Adam's sin to his posterity, had respect to the natural depravity which intervened, and in virtue of which they became partakers of his sin and rendered themselves deserving of being visited with the same punishment to which he exposed himself.

This view of the doctrine of imputation, we say, seems preferable to the other, and commends itself to us in many ways. The doctrine of immediate imputation is encompassed with insuperable difficulties and may be refuted by such arguments as these.

1. It is contrary to the connection which justice and the nature of the case require should subsist between guilt and punishment. According to this connection there must be guilt in every individual before he can be regarded as lying under condemnation or an obligation to suffer punishment, because condemnation is the result of

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guilt—guilt is the cause both of condemnation and punishment. Where there is no transgression of the law there can be no sin and no punishment. All punishment has its foundation in guilt. This is agreeable to justice and the nature of the case. For there would be no proportion between punishment and those on whom it is to be inflicted, if they were not considered as in a state of depravity on account of which they deserved to be judged and condemned. In this case there would not be the proportion which nevertheless is required by the justice of God. If it be true that guilt must uniformly precede punishment in one and the same subject, then certainly we must hold that in the posterity of Adam depravity goes before condemnation. What reason would there be otherwise for inflicting punishment upon them? On what ground could they be under an obligation to suffer it?

We expect to find the connection of which we now speak in all who are subjected to punishment. The whole of Adam's posterity are in a state of condemnation. They are in that state in consequence of his sin. But the ground on which they are regarded as in such a state can only be guilt in the individual subject, which, in its own nature, uniformly precedes it.

2. A sin which is not ours cannot be the cause of our punishment. But the sin of Adam or of another person is not ours unless by participation, communion, and consent on our part. It cannot, therefore, be the cause of our punishment except in the way we have now mentioned, and accordingly by *mediate* imputation. The major term of our proposition none will deny. The minor term, also, is sufficiently evident; for sin is an act, which remains in the person of the transgressor, and does not pass to another. The sin of another, therefore, cannot be my sin unless by participation on my part, and cannot be the cause why I am punished, except on the ground now stated. In other words, the actual sin of Adam in Paradise is ours not by *immediate* but by *mediate* imputation.

3. If the cause of a thing be in ourselves, that cause is not to be sought for in another. But we have in us the cause of condemnation,—depravity, namely,—and therefore we are not to seek for that cause in another. The major term of this proposition is plain, because an individual would be punished in double measure and on two accounts, if he had in himself that which is the cause of punishment, and at the sametime were punished for the sin of another. It would thus be worse with him than with the person who was the origin and cause of sin. The minor term of the proposition cannot

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be denied,—that we have in ourselves, namely, the ground or cause of condemnation or depravity,—unless it be denied that such depravity in us is a cause of condemnation, which however is universally admitted. We must hold therefore that the imputation of Adam can be only *mediate*, in respect, we mean, of the depravity which exists in us and which is the proper and proximate cause of condemnation.

4. Whatever be the reason and ground of the punishment which God inflicts, for that reason and on that ground he also imputes sin. But God actually punishes only those who are in a state of depravity, and therefore he imputes sin only on the ground of that depravity. Both terms of this proposition are evident enough. For what is it to impute sin but to resolve to punish an individual on account of it? If then God does not actually punish except where there is sin (which all admit), then neither can he determine to punish except on the same ground. For what he actually does, that he also resolves to do; and what is the imputation of Adam's sin to his posterity but just a determination to punish them on account of that sin? As he does not punish, therefore, save on the ground of depravity in the individuals punished, it is plain that he has not resolved to punish except on the same ground, or, which is the same thing, that he does not impute the sin of Adam to his posterity save on the ground of their participation in his depravity.

5. God cannot impute what he cannot in justice inflict. But he cannot justly inflict punishment except on those who are chargeable with sin, and therefore it cannot be imputed except to such. All allow that he can justly punish only those who are in a state of depravity. But, if this be true, neither can he impute it save to such. For what is imputation? It is a judicial act by which God condemns an individual to punishment on account of sin. But he cannot in justice will what he cannot in justice execute; for otherwise he would will that the execution of which is injustice. And thus we must conclude that he would be unjust in willing to punish Adam's posterity save on the ground of their participating in his depravity.

6. Imputation is a judicial and just act. But to punish an individual on account of the sin of another, without taking into consideration his participation in that sin, is an arbitrary act. The two things accordingly are irreconcilable. To punish a man on account of another's sin, without his being in any way a partaker of that sin, is not an act of justice but of arbitrariness on the part of him who wills and determines to punish. But imputation is an act of justice alone and therefore not arbitrary. And if it be so, there can be no impu-

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tation of the sin of another unless on the ground of participation in that sin. That it is an arbitrary act however to punish a man for the sin of another without taking into account his participation in that sin is evident, because it is the sin of another in regard to which he has had no communion. So at least the matter must be viewed. If imputation be immediate, why then does God punish men on account of Adam's sin? Is this required by his justice? Unquestionably not. For sin is something personal, and pertains to others only when they participate in it, and accordingly God would thus punish men for the sin of another merely in the exercise of his own pleasure. Why, moreover, should he punish them for that single offence, and not for all the other sins which he committed before a child was born to him? No reason can be given but this, that he so willed it. Why does he not punish in children all the sins of their parents? Why only the sin of our first parent? The only answer is, just because he willed it. If this be the case, what becomes of his justice, seeing that imputation, as we have said, is a judicial act—an act of justice and not of mere will and pleasure? The opinion is thus untenable that Adam's sin is imputed to his posterity immediately and without any consideration of their own corruption.

7. Imputation after the fall is precisely the same as it would have been if Adam had continued in innocence. But the imputation of righteousness would have been mediate, and therefore such is the imputation of sin. The major term is plain. The sin of Adam cannot be imputed in one way and his righteousness in another; God cannot deal with man after the fall with greater strictness of justice than he would have done if the fall had never happened. If we must be injured by his fall, then we must have been benefitted by his righteousness also; for in respect of the grounds on which they rest they cannot be separated, although some divines would do so. But the righteousness of Adam would have been imputed to his posterity not immediately but mediately, and therefore his sin must be imputed in the same way.

8. Nothing must be ascribed to God which he has declared to be inconsistent with and opposed to himself. Yet he declares, and declares with an oath, that he takes no pleasure in visiting the sins of parents upon their children, Ezek. xviii. 20. Why then should we attribute to him what is contrary to his perfections? He says that "the son shall not bear the iniquity of the father." Is this to be understood absolutely? No, for he says that he will visit "the iniquity of the fathers upon the children unto the third and fourth

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generation." Exod. xx. 5. The punishment therefore inflicted upon children for the sins of their parents rests on this ground, that the children partake of the same depravity as their parents.

But it is objected that God has elsewhere declared that he will visit the iniquities of the fathers upon their children. This we admit; but we say that this will be done only because the children partake of the depravity of their parents, and approve of and imitate their sins. God besides says that he will do this only to the fourth generation; whereas, if all Adam's posterity be punished for his sin, he would do it for thousands of generations. Moreover he does not punish the sins of parents upon their children except with temporal evils, whereas in the present case we are speaking of those which are everlasting. We infer therefore that he does not inflict punishment upon children for the sins of their parents unless they in some way homologate these sins, unless they be regarded as partaking of their depravity.

9. The apostle supplies us with another argument. In that passage in his writings (Rom. v. 12) which has given rise to so much disputing on the present subject, and from which our opponents chiefly draw their arguments in favour of immediate imputation, in that passage we say we have enough to overturn their opinion and to establish our own.

"By one man," Paul says, "sin entered into the world, and death by sin, and so death passed upon all men." &c. (Rom. v. 12.)

Sin is here considered as the cause of death in Adam's posterity. Nothing can be plainer than this. But what sin? Was it that which he committed in Paradise? Unquestionably not; but reigning depravity.

(.) For by "one man" we are to understand Adam as having already sinned. The sin accordingly which came into the world is not the particular offence which he committed, but the depravity to which he was subjected.

(..) The expression "sin entered into the world" must not, and cannot be understood as referring to the act of sin on the part of Adam. For it denotes the power of sin which so entered, and not the sin itself—sin in habit—depravity. The expression would have no force if it referred to Adam's actual sin.

(∴) By the words "entered into the world," we are not to understand imputation. According to Paul's mode of speaking in this chapter and elsewhere, they signify sin reigning in the world. He means that sin has entered as a tyrannical master, subjected all men to its power, and brought death in its train.

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(: :) The apostle, let it be observed, says "*by* one man," not *on account of* one man. If however imputation be immediate, he must certainly have used the latter, viz., *on account of* one man. But he employs the word "by" to show that Adam begat children in a state of depravity, and along with that depravity propagated sin, and consequently death.

The last words of the verse are ἐφ' ᾧ πάντες ἥμαρτον ;—"by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin, and so death passed upon all, for all have sinned." What language can be plainer ? Yet our opponents give a different translation, and say "in whom," *i.e.*, in Adam as the head "all have sinned." But

(.) The Greeks in this case would have said ἐν ᾧ, whereas here we have ἐφ' ᾧ.

(. .) The name of Adam in the beginning of the verse is too far removed from what the words ἐφ' ᾧ introduce, if they refer to him. Too many clauses intervene. The predicate in the close of the verse must certainly refer to the subject that immediately precedes, namely sin.

(.·.) We must retain the use and signification which the expression has in the New Testament and among Greek writers, and translate it "for," or because "all have sinned," have become partakers of sin, are the subjects and slaves of sin. All accordingly are involved in the same death with Adam, because they partake of the same sin which entered into the world. Death has passed upon all, because all have sinned, all are depraved. Sin accordingly is propagated, as we understand, by means of depravity, and on the ground of this depravity sin is imputed to us for punishment.

This view of the matter is further confirmed by the comparison which the apostle institutes between Adam and Christ, verses 15, &c., between the depravity of Adam as the cause of all our misery and the righteousness of Christ as the cause of our salvation. In this comparison our opponents think they have a sure and firm foundation on which to rest their doctrine of immediate imputation. For they say that, as the righteousness of Christ is the immediate and proximate cause of our salvation, the disobedience of Adam is and must also be the immediate cause of our death and destruction, and accordingly that the sin which he committed may be imputed to us as if we ourselves had committed it, just as the obedience of our surety is imputed to us as if we ourselves had rendered it. This according to them is the reason why Paul institutes the comparison in this passage. But

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(.) Let us keep in mind the distinction which according to the nature of the thing there is between the imputation of sin and of righteousness—a distinction which must be obvious to all. Although it were true that the righteousness of Christ is immediately imputed to us, the comparison does not hold in every respect, but must be kept within proper limits. For the imputation of sin is an act of justice, whereas the imputation of the obedience of another is an act of kindness or grace which may be done without any violation of justice. Now, when we speak of the imputation of sin, the cause of justice is at stake, and therefore there can be no such imputation without a just reason, without a righteous ground. For in such a matter a judge cannot act merely in the exercise of his own pleasure. He must have good ground for imputing the sin of one man to another, even the participation in that sin by him to whom it is imputed. In imputing to an individual, however, the good which is done by another, he may act from kindness alone without infringing upon the claims of justice. Besides,

(..) Christ was our surety, Adam unquestionably did not undertake for us. His posterity have not received him in this capacity, nor can it be proved that he took upon him such an office, whereas Christ did take our sins upon him. There is thus a vast difference between him and Adam.

(∴) But we positively deny the immediate imputation of the righteousness of Christ. It is undoubtedly mediate, and requires that there be something in us before it take place. None obtain salvation in Christ except those who receive him in the exercise of faith. Unless an individual repent and believe he cannot become a partaker of the righteousness of Christ. No one can be interested in his righteousness unless he take him as his surety. But no one so takes him unless he wills to do so. There must therefore be consent on the part of an individual. The imputation of the righteousness of Christ to eternal life, accordingly, is made to us through the medium of faith and repentance, by which, according to the good pleasure of God, we enjoy an interest in Christ, and in the righteousness which he has wrought out. In like manner the imputation of Adam's sin cannot be immediate unless an individual have had connexion with him as a federal head. But his posterity have never given their consent to regard him in the light of a surety. And thus again the doctrine of mediate imputation is confirmed. In like manner, when the apostle says, (1 Cor. xv. 22) "In Adam all die," he means we die in consequence of our participation in that depravity which was

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caused by his sin; and when it is added, "in Christ all shall be made alive," it is meant that we shall be so by faith. In both cases a medium of imputation is required. We conclude, therefore, that Adam's sin is imputed to his posterity on the ground of their natural depravity and consequent participation in his sin.

2. We must now consider the original and primary cause of the condition of depravity in which we are placed—Adam, namely, and the sin which he committed; our own depravity being the ground on which his sin is imputed to us for punishment.

But how, it is asked, are we involved in this depravity by Adam and his sin? Those with whom we have just been disputing, and who maintain the doctrine of the immediate imputation of his sin, consider depravity in his posterity not as the antecedent but as the consequent of that imputation, and as the punishment accordingly inflicted upon them because of his actual sin, and so forming part of the death with which God threatened to visit him when he said, "In the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die," *i.e.*, temporally, spiritually, and eternally. They hold therefore that Adam was the federal head and representative of his posterity, and that they are regarded as having in their own persons committed his sin, that because he sinned they also have sinned, and that, as he was condemned to temporal, spiritual, and eternal death, to depravity and punishment, they are also under a similar condemnation. Thus, according to them, our depravity is not the ground on which Adam's sin is imputed to us, but the consequence of that imputation, and is inflicted upon us as a punishment, and as a part of the threatening—"Thou shalt surely die." The doctrine therefore of those who regard depravity in Adam's posterity as a punishment of the actual sin which he committed in Paradise, is based upon the supposed existence of a covenant between God and him—a covenant in virtue of which he was the representative head of all his posterity, in such a sense that the same actual sin which he committed was also regarded as committed by them.

But let us examine this system a little more closely.

(.) Although the covenant which is alleged to have been made in the state of innocence be admitted, and although Adam be held to have been the federal head and representative of all his posterity, the conclusion drawn by our opponents does not necessarily follow: because Adam may be regarded as standing in such a relation, in respect of the punishment or evil to which his posterity are exposed, on this ground that they would be partakers of his depravity. From

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the mere circumstance accordingly of his being their federal head it cannot be inferred that their depravity is the punishment of his sin, seeing that it may with equal propriety be viewed as the condition or ground on which the imputation of his sin depends. Supposing besides that he had been a representative head, it does not follow that depravity in his posterity wears the aspect of punishment, because even in Adam himself it had not such an aspect, and as we have already shewn, formed no part of the threatening "thou shalt surely die."

(..) The federal relation in which Adam is said to have stood in innocence is a mere imagination, and, as we have proved, rests on no solid basis.

(∴) Depravity in Adam's posterity cannot be regarded in the light of punishment, *first*, because it is in them the cause of punishment. It is universally admitted that in consequence of it they deserve to die; but how in this case can it be punishment itself? *Secondly*, because such an opinion is opposed to the justice of God. That justice requires that there be some reason for inflicting punishment of this kind upon men. But no reason can be given for doing so, if depravity itself be a punishment. And therefore it is not really so, for God cannot inflict such punishment in consistency with his holiness and justice.

The only question then is whether the sin of Adam—a sin in which his posterity took no part—be the ground of that depravity which naturally belongs to them. There must beyond all question be a reason why they are punished; for God renders to every man according to his deeds. But no reason can be assigned unless we have recourse to the good pleasure of God, which in a case that involves the interests of justice we are not at liberty to do. We conclude, therefore, that depravity in them is not to be regarded in the light of punishment, and cannot be derived from Adam as the federal head and representative of the human race.

It remains, therefore, that we explain on what ground and for what reason depravity has passed from Adam to his offspring, or how his sin can be the cause of that depravity. And the explanation is not difficult, if we keep in mind the discussion in which we have just been engaged. Depravity in Adam was the result of his actual sin, because it was not only a transitory act, but an act by committing which he completely estranged himself from God the supreme good. He was accordingly given up by God to his own evil desires, and hence arose the depravity in which he was involved. His posterity, however,

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descend from him according to the law which God has ordained—the law by which like begets like—and consequently his children were born in the same condition in which he himself was—their depravity is the result of his own. But as God could have abrogated this law and thus arrested depravity in its progress from Adam to his offspring, we must admit that God by a judicial act resolved that the law to which we have referred should operate in the ordinary way. By this judicial act he not only did not interfere with the law, but he delivered the posterity of Adam to the depravity which he had entailed upon himself. He might have done otherwise; he might have created a new race of men, and thus have checked depravity in its course. But there was no reason why he should have done so.

If the question therefore be, why God has imputed the sin of Adam to his posterity, we reply because they are partakers of his depravity. But if it be further asked, why he has subjected them to this depravity when he might have arrested it in its course, we answer that he has done so agreeably to the law of generation which he himself established, and that no reason can be assigned for the abrogation of that law. Adam therefore is to be regarded as the natural head from whom the whole human race descend by the natural law of generation, and who in consequence inherit the same depravity with himself. God besides had his own reasons for not interfering with the operation of this law—reasons into which it does not become us to enquire. It is enough for us to know that he has not acted unjustly in the matter. But on this we shall offer some remarks immediately.

2. We have still to consider the subject *controversially*; and in doing so we shall

(*a*) Present the various systems which have been devised by our opponents and

(*b*) Vindicate the doctrine which we hold from the objections that may be brought against it.

(*a*) In the first four centuries the subject occasioned no dispute. Christians at that early period rested satisfied with tracing depravity and obligation to punishment to Adam as their source. In the fifth century, however, during which Pelagius appeared, men began to investigate the matter somewhat more closely. Pelagius denied both depravity and punishment on account of it. He said that death was a natural consequence; that there was no such thing as original corruption, but that men were still in unimpaired possession of all their powers. On this subject we have spoken at length in our Ecclesias

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tical History.* He was vigorously opposed by Augustine, who maintained, as we now do, both original sin and condemnation to temporal and eternal death. These disputes gave birth to another sect, the Semipelagians, namely, or Massilienses, as they were sometimes called. This sect avoided both extremes, and, while admitting the natural depravity of men, did not do so to the same extent as Augustine, but held that they were able, in the exercise of their own powers, both to repent and believe. They also denied that original sin would be visited with eternal punishment, although they admitted that, because of sin, temporal death had passed upon all.† In the thirteenth century, moreover, and subsequently, these disputes were revived between the Dominicans and Franciscans, the Thomists and Scotists, the Jansenists and Jesuits. In the Romish Church the Dominicans adhere to the opinions of Augustine, whereas the Franciscans incline to Pelagianism and Semipelagianism. The Thomists, so called from Thomas Aquinas, range themselves on the side of the Dominicans, and the Scotists on that of the Franciscans, while the Jansenists again hold the views of the Dominicans, and the Jesuits those of Aquinas.

The Council of Trent very prudently did not meddle with these controversies. It established by a decree the doctrine of original sin, but did not explain what the nature of that sin is, or in what it consists. The opinion commonly held by the Romish Church is almost the same as our own, only they exempt the Virgin Mary, whom we do not, and hold, what we deny, that natural depravity is not such as to render man utterly unable to perform good works, but that he may do some such works in the way of preparing himself for the reception of further grace from God, and of thus rendering it congruous in God to bestow that grace.

Those who differ from the opinion held on this subject by the Romish Church are not agreed among themselves. The Socinians adopt the views of Pelagius. The Arminians, or Remonstrants, are almost Semipelagians; but they hold that there is not sin in man unless it meets with the consent of his will, and that it is not natural to him in any other respect than that he is by nature inclined to do what he is in the habit of doing. They hold that he is subject to death, but that, though it will last for ever, it does not comprehend everlasting torments; that God by Christ, and in virtue of his obe-

* Institutiones Historiæ Ecclesiæ, vol. iv. pp. 555, &c.
† Do. do. vol. iv. pp. 597, &c.

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dience, has delivered all men from this condemnation; that all men are reconciled to him; and that he has formed a new covenant with them, so that no one will perish unless he either reject it or fall from it by sin.

(*b*) Let us examine the objections urged against the doctrine which we hold and endeavour to refute them.

1. Christ has said regarding little children, "of such is the kingdom of heaven," Matt. xix. 14.

In answer to this objection, we say, (.) That Christ has reference in these words to the dispositions of children, and is speaking of his disciples, who should cherish and manifest the same spirit of meekness and humility: and, (..) That, although "of such is the kingdom of heaven," it does not follow that children are not in a state of depravity and of condemnation; for the kingdom of heaven is not bestowed upon them because of their exemption from these, but because God resolves to deal with them in the same way as with their parents, of whom they are a part. To this subject we have given a fuller consideration in our Sacred Dissertations.*

2. It is objected again that the heathen have performed works that are praiseworthy and good. We say, in reply, that they have performed these works, not in their own strength, but by the grace which God, in the exercise of his good pleasure, imparted to them. It is difficult for us, besides, to determine whether these works really deserved to be called good; because it is not enough that they be so materially, they must also be so formally, *i.e.*, they must proceed from the principle of love to God and to our neighbour. The good works of the heathen, however, spring for the most part from other principles—from nature and inclination, or from ambition and a desire of praise; and, although we would not call them splendid sins, yet they do not deserve the name of good works.

3. We are referred particularly to Cornelius, as one whose works were acceptable to God, Acts x. 2. 4. But he is an inappropriate instance, because he was not a heathen in the ordinary sense of the term. The account given of him shews that he had a knowledge of the true God, and that he was a devout man. He was only unacquainted with Christ, who had appeared in the world to work out our redemption, and was brought by God, through the instrumentality of Peter, to the knowledge of the Saviour. But he was not ignorant of

* Dissertationes Sacræ, Lugd. Bat. 1771.

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true religion. He was on familiar terms with the Jews, although he did not make an open profession of their faith. This objection, therefore, is altogether without force.

4. According to our opinion, we are told, human liberty is completely destroyed; for we say that man is the servant of sin, and accordingly under the necessity of sinning. We have considered this objection in a previous part of our work, where we shewed that human liberty perfectly consists with a state of sin and with the providence of God, provided we form correct notions regarding the nature of that liberty.

5. It is said, moreover, that our opinion cannot be reconciled with the holiness, justice, wisdom, and goodness of God. Let us see if this really be the case.

(*a*) It is opposed to the *holiness* of God; because, if depravity be natural to man, God must be held to be its author, for he is the author of nature. But his holiness, we reply, is not in the slightest degree affected, because the soul is created by him in a state of purity. It becomes depraved only in consequence of its union to the body. He cannot, therefore, be regarded as the efficient cause of sin.

(*b*) But neither is our opinion irreconcilable with the justice of God. That justice, as we believe, is entire, whether we view it in reference to

(†) Adam or

(††) His posterity.

(†) In reference to Adam, God left him in consequence of his sin to become the servant of sin to such an extent that depravity completely obtained the ascendancy over him. And, certainly, it was no act of injustice in God to deliver man, who had committed so heinous an offence, to its natural consequences and effects—to give him up to his own lust after he had by this sin renounced his allegiance to his Creator. Hence originated the depravity which now has the mastery over him. And then, in regard to punishment, there is certainly nothing unjust in God's inflicting that which he had threatened, after man had rendered himself deserving of it.

(††) In reference to his posterity, their condemnation is no reflection upon the justice of God, because there is a reason why they should be subjected to the same punishment. This reason is not the arbitrary will of God, but the natural depravity which they all inherit. Neither is it unjust that they should partake of the corruption of Adam, because it descends by the law of generation. There

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was no reason why God should interfere with the operation of this law, and there was no merit on the part of man which could induce him to do so. If any obscurity still attach to this subject, let us modestly and with submission acknowledge that God is a being of infinite majesty and holiness, and that we are unacquainted with his ways in all their variety and all their extent.

(*c.*) Our opinion casts no reflection on the wisdom of God. He had reasons worthy of himself for causing the sin of Adam to descend to his posterity—that opportunity, namely, might be afforded for the manifestation of his other perfections in the economy of grace.

(*d.*) The same holds true in regard to the goodness of God. He did not allow men to become miserable for the purpose of cutting them off from his fellowship and of consigning them to destruction, but with the view of compassionating and saving them. Paul expressly says, "God hath concluded them all in unbelief, that he might have mercy upon all," Rom. xi. 32. As he dealt with Adam, to whom after the fall he made known his purpose of grace, so has he dealt with his posterity, by abrogating the condition in which he was placed and from which he fell, by doing away with the original means of attaining salvation, and by substituting another in the covenant of grace. This is called the repealing of the covenant of works, and to this we shall next direct our attention.

END OF VOLUME FIRST.

17 AP 51

ERRATA.

Page 65. Dele foot note and nine lines from the top.
„ 335. 8 line from bottom for "strenously" read "strenuously."

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